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To the  
 Right Reverend Father in God,  
**ALEXANDER,**  
 Lord Bishop of S A R U M,  
 My very much  
 Honoured Lord and Patron.

MY LORD,



He Church of God is very fitly represented as a Lilly among Thorns, Cant. 2. 2. which though it self be both harmless and pleasant, yet must expect unpleasant and harsh usage, from the Ill-neighbourhood of them who are as Briers and Thorns. Prophane persons, like the wild Boar, will be at- Mic. 7. 4; Psa. 80. tempting to dig up the Roots; and 12. Cant. 2. Hereticks, like little Foxes, will be 15.

## The Epistle

*spoiling the tender Grapes, of this*  
 Psal. 80. *Vine, which the Lords own right hand*  
 15 *hath planted. And both these sorts*  
 Gal. 4. 29. *of them that are born after the flesh,*  
*through their enmity to them that are*  
*born after the Spirit, as they greatly*  
*disturb the progress and peace of the*  
*Shepherds of Christs flock (who must*  
 Jer. 15. *expect to be men of strife, and to op-*  
 10. *pose themselves against a current of*  
*prophaness and errors (of whose trou-*  
 2 Cor. 11. *bles, together with the care of the*  
 16, 28. *Church of God; the perils from false*  
*brethren are not the least part) so to*  
*those that are of the Flock, it must*  
*needs be an occasion of many sad*  
*thoughts and searchings of heart,*  
*many sad temptations and trials of*  
*their stability.*

Now the *Word of God*, As it sup-  
 plies us with such comforts which in  
 the multitude of the thoughts of our  
 Psal. 94. hearts, may at all times delight and  
 19. bear up our souls: So in this sort of  
 Psal. 119. distresses, we may truly say, *This is*  
 50. *our comfort in our distress, Thy word*  
*hath quickned us. And that, Unless*  
*this word had been our delight and*  
*comfort,*

## Dedicatory.

comfort, we must needs have sunk and  
perished under these troubles and tri-  
als. Whose heart would not fail  
him to see so many false Prophets,  
and false Christs arise in the Church,  
if Christ had not told us before, *That* <sup>Mat. 24.</sup>  
*false Christs and false Prophets should* <sup>24.</sup>  
*arise*; and St. Paul, *That in the last* <sup>2 Tim. 3.</sup>  
*dayes perilous times should come*: And <sup>1.</sup>  
St. Peter, *that There should arise false* <sup>2 Pet. 2.</sup>  
*Teachers among us, which should pri-* <sup>1.</sup>  
*vily bring in damnable Heresies, even*  
*denying the Lord that bought them?*  
What sad thoughts and searchings of  
heart would the divisions of Reuben  
cause, while the sons of Belial are <sup>Judg. 9.]</sup>  
confederate in wickedness, if Christ <sup>15, 16.</sup>  
himself had not told us, that his Co-  
ming and Doctrin would not *send* <sup>Mat. 10.</sup>  
*peace in the earth, but a sword,* not <sup>34.</sup>  
*designedly, but by accident?* How  
would it startle us to hear the confi-  
dence of many in citing the word of  
Truth, for the defence of dangerous  
errors; if the Apostle had not told  
us, that Satan doth oft *transform* <sup>2 Cor. 11;</sup>  
*himself into an Angel of light*; and <sup>14.</sup>  
the Evangelists, that he had the im-  
pu-

## The Epistle

Mat. 4. 6. prudence to quote Scripture to our Saviour to entice him to evil; and therefore that it is *no wonder if his ministers do transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ?* How would it stagger us to see the outward strictness of life, and specious pretences of Sectaries, if Christ had not told us, that many should come in *sheeps clothing, who inwardly are ravening wolves?* How would it sad our hearts to see men of good affections, and excellent gifts, drawn away to errors; if Christ had not told us that the Seducers will be so prevalent, as to deceive *(if it were possible) even the very Elect?* What sadness must it needs work in our hearts, to see men sleight and loath the spiritual Manna of Gods publick Ordinances, and to long for flesh of their own fancying; if the Apostle had not told us, that the time would come, *when men would not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own lusts, would gather them an heap of Teachers, that should claw their itching ears?* Whose heart would not break to see the general cold.

Mat. 24.  
24.

2 Tim. 4.  
3.

## Dedicatory.

coldness and want of zeal for God;  
yea, that Irreligiousness and Atheism  
of many; if Christ himself had not  
told us, that when *Iniquity should so*  
*much abound* in the later dayes, *the* Mat. 24.  
*love of many would wax cold.* 12.

Now God in his Word, hath told  
us of these things before hand, to the  
end that when we see them come to  
pass; *we should not be offended:* Joh. 16.

And withal, that being thus fore-  
warned, we might endeavour to arm  
our selves against these trials. It is  
the duty of all men, like the good  
Berdeans, to *search the Scriptures,* and Acts 17.  
find out the deceits of seducers. And 11.

those especially whom God hath  
made *watchmen* over his people, Ezek. 3.  
ought to give all diligence in disco- 17.  
vering these enemies, that would  
gladly find an opportunity, to sow  
these Tares, while we are sleeping: Mat. 13.

To settle, as much as may be, them  
that stand fast, to reclaim (if possi-  
ble) them that are gone astray; and  
to clear our selves from the blood of  
all men. Acts 20.

This small Tract is designed for  
the

## The Epistle

the promoting of these Ends, which I hope may stir up others of better abilities and leasure, to go further in so necessary a work. If any object, that this Doctrine of the Gospel being generally owned, did not need to be asserted: I answer, I could wish that all our Neighbours were both almost, and altogether, such Christians as they ought to be: But it is too sadly evident, that all are not *Christians*, that go under that general Name. Beside, if Saint *Augustine's* learned books *de Civitate Dei*, and that later Work of the noble *Du Plessis De veritate Christi. Relig.* be accounted both excellent and useful: then why may not another of the same nature, that followeth them, though not *passibus equis*, be esteemed acceptable, and useful in these giddy times, wherein  
Psalm 82. all the foundations of the Earth are  
5. out of course? And as for the stile, it is such as is both suitable to my own Genius, and I hope to the subject here handled: And being designed chiefly for the benefit of ignorant  
and

### *Dedictory.*

and misguided people: *I* thought it better to use such a language as might profit them, then such as might amuse them. However, if *the* <sup>Gen. 27.</sup> *hands be rough like Esau's, I hope* <sup>22.</sup> *the voyce will appear to be Jacob's.*

Whatsoever it is, it renders it self to your Lordships acceptance, as a Testimony of my canonical Obedience, and dutiful Respects to your Lordship, as my Reverend Diocefan, and much Honoured Patron: Whose candid construction of this mean Present, will much encourage the Authour; and your good Prayers promote the success of this small piece in the ends for which it is designed.

That *I* may no longer detain your Lordship from more weighty matters in reading these lines, *I* shall humbly take leave to break off: beseeching the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, to double unto your Lordship, the abundance of those Graces and Gifts of his Holy Spirit, which may render you a common Good in your place here, and happy in  
giving

## The Epistle, &c.

giving up the accounts of your  
Stewardship, with much joy. Which  
is the hearty prayer of

Your Lordships most

Warmist; humble and ready

March 1.

1665.

SERVANT

Paul Lathom.

The

**C**HAP. I. *The Soul of man in its first Creation, was perfectly free from Ignorance and Errour: Errours the Fruit of the Fall of our First-Parents. The pernicious nature of Errours, in matters of Religion.*

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...the Holy Spirit  
...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son



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...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son

...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son  
...the Father and the Son



*Christ Crucified:*  
O R,  
The Doctrine of the Gospel  
A S S E R T E D,  
Against *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Errors,  
Revived under the Notion  
O F  
N E W L I G H T S.

---

C H A P. I.

*The Soul of Man in its first Creation,  
was perfectly free from Ignorance  
and Error. Errors the Fruit of the  
Fall of our first Parents. The per-  
nicious Nature of Errors in matters  
of Religion.*



He infinite Wisdom and  
Power of the Creator of the  
World, did compose all  
things in the Universe, in  
Number, Weight, and Mea-  
sure. And in making Man  
(about which the whole Sa-  
cred Trinity seems in an especial manner Gen. 1. 1  
to consult) he was pleased to shew a most 26.

B

Ex-

## The Doctrine of

Exquisite piece of his Workmanship, creating him *after his own Image*, so far as a Creature (whose Nature speaks him finite) was capable of representing his Creator; who as he is Infinite in his Being, so likewise in all Excellencies, and Perfections. The *soul of man* considered in it self, as a Spiritual and Immortal substance, endued with such admirable Faculties of Understanding, Conscience, Memory, Will, and Affections, as it gives us great reason to say with the Psalmist, that we are *fearfully and wonderfully made*; so it affords very ample occasion for breaking forth into the high praises of the God of the spirits of all flesh, and saying, *O Lord how manifold are thy Works!* In Wisdom hast thou made them all.

Psal. 139.

14.

Num. 27.

16.

Psal. 104.

24.

Our souls are beautiful even in those ruins into which they are fallen by transgressing the command of our Creator: But how glorious were these spiritual Beings, when they came first out of their Creator's hands, *beautiful as the Morning*, and *little lower than the Angels*? Then was this little world *Man*, like a well-ordered Kingdom, where the Prince commands with singular Prudence and Justice, and the people obey with a willing and submissive obsequiousness. Then the Understanding did sit at the Stern, with singular foresight and exactness to steer our course, and the Will and Affections did with as much readiness apply themselves to follow the Dictates of Reason,

*the Gospel Asserted.*

as one Member of our Body doth bestir it self in ministring to the necessities of another.

Those that fancy that there was a different inclination in the Superiour and Inferiour Faculties of the souls of our first Parents from their Creation, and that it is inseparable from the Nature of man as consisting of soul and body: (From whence they suppose such a Conflict to have been in the soul of man between these different Motions, as did dispose him to forsake his own happiness): These I say, might be better advised, if they did duly consider what is meant by Gods making man *after his own Image*. For Gen. 1. as the *supream Being and first Cause* of all 26. things is in his measure, that is infinitely and unconceivably, perfect in all his Attributes and Works, and amongst other Attributes, so perfect in Knowledg and Wisdom, that he is said to *cover himself with* Psal. 104. *Light as with a Garment*, and to be such a 2. *Light, that in him is no Darknes at all*. Even 1 John 1. so by mans being made after the Image of 5. his Maker, we are to understand that in his measure, and according to his capacity, he was perfect in all those Excellencies that did appertain to his Nature. And as the Understanding is one of the noblest, and the leader of the other Faculties of mans soul, we must therefore conceive that to be made perfect in Knowledg, so far as to be capable of rightly understanding whatsoever was necessary or suitable to the Nature of man

## The Doctrine of

to know : That this Light was pure and free from being mixed with any darkness of Ignorance or Error. And that the Will and Affections were perfectly subjected to the dominion of the Understanding, so that they did then as readily obey and execute its Dictates, as the Members of our Body do now move themselves at the appointment of the Will.

Heb. 13.  
23. Nor are we to imagine that in this estate of perfect holiness and happiness in which man was placed, there was any such drawing downward of the sensitive Appetite, as might either disturb the peace of the soul by the contrariety of its motion to the dictates of Reason, or else dispose and incline man to swerve from the right way. But even as we believe the Saints in Heaven, when their bodies shall be re-united to their souls, to be *made perfect in holiness*, and nothing to remain in them, that may tend either to disturb the perfection of their happiness, or to draw them away from serving and enjoying him that is the chiefest good. So we may most reasonably believe that in mans first Creation, there was no manner of defect or error in his Understanding, nor any discording motions arising from the union of the soul and body ; nor yet any clouds arising from the sensitive Appetite, to darken the light of Reason.

And whereas there are some that conceive the Fall of man to have been occasioned by his

*the Gospel Asserted.*

his *Inadvertency*, that, being of a Finite, though perfect understanding, he did not therefore apprehend or consider all things at once: And therefore fixing his mind wholly upon the pleasantness of the Fruit, so as not at the same time duly to consider the strictness of Gods command, and the threatening that was annexed to it, he did hereby come to violate *Gods precept* by embracing that *pleasant fruit*. Neither doth this evince any shortness of sight, or natural ignorance or error to have been in man from his Creation: For if he did not consider all those things together which he ought to have considered, yet had he power and capacity sufficient to have apprehended all things *necessary* to be considered at once; for else we should lay a fault upon the Goodness or Wisdom of God in the Creation of man, if we believe him to have permitted such a defect in his Nature as must needs occasion his sinning: The default therefore is to be imputed to mans want of putting in execution that power which God had given him. Man fell, not because he wanted knowledg enough to hold him upright, but because *he did not put forth that power* which his Creator had given him to apprehend the strictness of his Law, and the certainty of the inflicting the penalty that was annexed, in case of mans disobedience.

By what hath been spoken we may be put in mind to reflect with sadness of heart,

upon that happiness which once our Nature  
 did enjoy. Thus God made man upright,  
 but he sought out many inventions. And how  
 art thou fallen from Heaven, O thou that  
 wast made but little lower than the Angels?  
 How unlike is man now to that Exquisite  
 piece which our Creator sent forth of his  
 hands perfect in beauty? Now the course  
 of Nature is inverted, and as all things in  
 mans soul were once governed with singular  
 order and harmony, so now there is as  
 great discord and disorder in all our facul-  
 ties and the exercises thereof. Now the  
 Will and Affections do sometimes with  
 their insinuation enveagle and bribe the  
 Reason of man, either to shut its eyes, or  
 else to pronounce false sentence upon things  
 that differ, to call good evil, and evil good.  
 Or if they cannot prevail to do this, they  
 then rise up like unruly Subjects against the  
 commands of their Sovereign, and shake off  
 that yoke of obedience which God in Na-  
 ture hath laid upon them, as in those incon-  
 tinent persons, who do with Medea in the  
 Poet, *Videre meliora & probare, but deter-  
 riora sequi*. Nor hath the Understanding it  
 self (though freer from corruption than the  
 other faculties) wholly escaped without de-  
 pravation, but partly through a dimness  
 and short-sightedness in it self, is subject to  
 Ignorance and Error; and partly through  
 the ill neighbourhood of a depraved Will  
 and disordered Affections, it is wofully  
 swerved

Eccles. 7.  
 29.

Isa. 5.20.

swerved from its original Rectitude and Integrity.

The wonderful Wisdom and Power of God is manifest in making such variety of *Features* in mens *Faces*, that amongst the many myriads of men that live upon the face of the Earth, there are not any two so exactly alike but they are to be distinguished by him that looks heedfully upon them. And the sad and, wonderful mischief of sin is as manifest in that it hath begotten as much *variety in mens minds*, as is in their *Physiognomies*; so that you can hardly meet with two men so exactly of one mind, that you will need to lay a thread upon them to know them apart. *From the beginning* doubtless it *was not so*. For, as the God of Truth is but one, and there is but one way of Truth; we may believe, that God who made the mind of man on purpose to apprehend the Truth, did not put such various tempers into mens minds at first, as might make them to have such different thoughts of the same thing, of which some must needs be false: For, *Cujus contrarium verum est, &c.* contrary conceptions of the same object, cannot both be true.

Now if Truth be so valuable, or rather unvaluable a Jewel, that the wise Man adviseth us *to buy it* at any rate, but to *sell it* at Prov. 23 no rate; then certainly Error which is 23. contrary to it, must needs be as evil and undesirable: as being not onely a debasing and

## The Doctrine of

pervverting of the first and leading Faculty of the Soul, and a drawing it beside the Truth, which it was made on purpose to contemplate, but also in that it produceth so many pernicious consequents in the world. When God confounded the Language of the builders of *Babel*, it is said,

Gen. 11.  
8.

*That they were scattered abroad upon the face of the Earth, and left off to build the City.*

And that confusion of Mind and Language which hath befallen us as the just desert and proper fruit of our sins, hath hindred the building up of the Church of God, and the edifying of mens souls, to Eternal Life: And hath scattered and severed men one from another in their Affections and Associations.

1 Cor. 1.  
12.

Hence have issued Schisms and making of parties; *one for Paul, another for Apollos, a third for Cephas, a fourth for Christ* in opposition to *Paul, Apollos, and Cephas*, all Teachers, and all Ordinances. And indeed, though difference in judgment about smaller matters ought not to produce distance in Affections, and standing aloof from Unity and Association; yet we find by daily experience that it doth bring forth these

Amos 3.  
9.

Apples of *Sodom*. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* Yea, it hath occasioned many to become indifferent, & others Scepticks in matters of Religion: And all these things have conspired to produce another effect of dangerous consequence, even the putting of a stumbling block in the way, to

turn

turn them aside from Religion, which else might have come to the embracing of it.

The best and most proper *Expedient* to help us against these *growing mischiefs*, is to get our souls well ballasted with substantial Knowledge of the Fundamentals of our Faith, that an over-large *sail of Affections*, may not betray us to those prejudices that are prepared against us, by the various *Winds of strange Doctrine* that are abroad. That we may be, like the Mountains, fixed and unmoveable, and not like Chaff and other leight and loose matter, *easily carried away and driven to and fro* with these blasts.

Now it is certain, that *Other foundati-*<sup>I Cor. 3.  
11.</sup>  
*on can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* And therefore as they are to be esteemed, *Houses built without a Foundation*, that are not bottomed upon him; so it will greatly concern all of us, to endeavour to be *rooted and built up in him*; Col. 2.7. which will be our best safeguard in these perilous times, wherein there are so many *Seducers* that watch for our souls; divers of whom do *bring in damnable Heresies*, even<sup>2 Pet. 2.1.</sup> *denying the Lord that bought them.*



## C H A P. I I.

*A right understanding of the Holy Scriptures is our best security against Errors. We need not sail to Rome to fetch it thence. Two extremes in the Interpreting of Scripture, both which do dangerously tend to induce us to Error.*

**T**He Papists do both injuriously and absurdly alledge, to the undervaluing of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, and setting the Authority of their Church above it, that all sorts of Hereticks have pretended the Scriptures to favour and father even their most deformed and monstrous Conceits. In this Allegation, they do not only wrong the Word of God in attempting to detract from its Authority, but also prejudice their own cause, by giving us just occasion to suspect either the Judgment or Designe of those that would impose upon us by such a Non-concluding Argument. For this very thing doth argue what great respect men are naturally enclined to shew to the Word of God; seeing, though many men hold that which is really contrary to it, yet

yet they would make it seem, as near as they can, to be agreeable to it. And it hence appears that they account an Argument drawn from the Scriptures to be very firm and powerful, seeing they take such pains to wrest the Scriptures to make them speak that which they never intended, on their side.

It is then very evident (and may be spoken for the honour of this *sure word of Prophecy*) that men of all Professions and Persuasions, do appeal to it as *the last Judge* in all Controversies appertaining to our Christian Faith. But the great thing controverted, is, What is the best way for Interpreting the Scriptures?

The Papists, if either *Self-interest*, or the just *Judgment of God* upon them, did not quite put out their eyes, could not possibly give up themselves to going round in these mills which grind for their advantage. In treating of the Authority of the *Scriptures*, they first will have the Scriptures to obtain Authority from the Testimony of the *Church*, and then the Authority of the Church shall be established from the Testimony of the Scriptures. So that the Church, before its Authority be proved, must give Authority to the Scriptures, and then the Scriptures which they suppose to have received their Authority from the Church, must give Authority to the Church. And in like manner they deal about the  
In-

*Interpretation of the Scriptures.* For if we ask, Who must have Authority so to Interpret the Scriptures, that we must rest in that Interpretation? They will tell you, *The Church.* And who is that Church? but he whom they suppose the Head of the Church, *The Pope.* So that, first that Interpretation which the *Pope* gives of the Scriptures, must establish his Authority to interpret them; and then by vertue of Authority with which he conceives himself to be invested by the Scriptures, he takes Authority over the Scriptures.

But we may well reckon it a considerable part of our happiness in matters of our Faith, that as we do, upon good grounds, believe the *Authority* of the Scriptures, to be such as needs not to be supported by the *Pope*; but to which indeed he ought to submit himself, and by which he must be judged: So we believe, upon sufficient grounds, that for the Interpretation of Scripture in matters necessary to our salvation, we need not send to *Rome* to be informed. We should esteem it an unpardonable injury, both to the Wisdom and Goodness of our Heavenly Father, if we should suppose that he had left his *Will* in order to our salvation, involved in such intricacies, as should not be obvious to be apprehended by those that with an *honest heart*, set themselves to search the Scriptures. And whereas in matters of less moment, there are some dark

dark places of Scripture, which the Lord hath thought meet to leave for the exercise of our *Industry*, and trial of our *Humility*; As to these we say, that as a man may be *saved* without a distinct understanding them, so the *Pope* not onely may erre, but hath foully erred in attempting the Interpretation of them. And I may reasonably add before I leave this, that the *Papists* in pleading for a necessity of *appealing* to the *Pope* as the *last Judge* of the Interpretation of Scripture, do quite shake the foundation of his power by overloading it with a too-high structure. For if we must needs believe our selves to be at a loss as to the meaning of the Scriptures, unless we have the *gracious Nod* of his *pretended Holiness* to confirm it, then why may we not as well suspect our selves not rightly to understand those Scriptures that are alleadged for the *Popes* Authority to interpret Scripture, unless his Authority do confirm us in this meaning of them? And if so, then the *Popes* Authority to interpret the Scriptures is wholly founded (as I intimated before) upon his own *Magisterial deciding* the meaning of Scriptures. And if even our Saviour saith, *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true*; then why may we not suspect the *Popes* Authority, which is wholly built upon *his own Testimony*? And if the *Popes* authority in this case be not reasonably confirmed, then are we as far to seek for  
the

John 5.  
31.

the meaning of the Scriptures, as before he delivered his judgment. And consequently the appealing to him in this matter, is so far from putting an end to all strife, that it is the way to continue an endless strife, till he hath better Asserted his own authority, then ever yet he hath done. And therefore we may very reasonably invert this Argument, and say, that if the appealing to the Pope, be not the way to satisfy our faith, but rather to make it giddy by running round in these mazes; therefore it is not the best way to refer our selves to him as an Arbitrator, or Umpire in those differences that are amongst us, about the meaning of some Texts of Scriptures. If yet they persist in pleading necessity to draw us to this inconvenience, and that without putting it to this reference, the suit will never be at an end. We answer, That as the case is very sad in our Church, in regard of these divisions of Reuben; so we may well suppose that the evil eye with which they look upon us, represents it as much worse then it is, when they would draw us to lean upon a broken Reed for fear of falling, to rest upon that for the strengthening of our Faith, which is not able to uphold it self (I mean the Pope's authority) and therefore will afford but a sorry support to us. Besides, when we find that in the Apostles times, there was great cause to complain of Multitudes of false Teachers, which then were risen up in the Church (all

(all which, no doubt, did pretend to the Patronage of the Scriptures, as our Modern Opinators now do) and yet we never hear St. Paul, who complains so much of them, to appeal to St. Peter (who was then alive, and able to give a better construction of the Scriptures than those that call themselves his Successors) for deciding those controversies, and pronouncing who was in the right; But he proceeds to cut his way by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of Eph. 6. God, and reckons these Weapons to be mighty <sup>17.</sup> through God, for pulling down strong Holds, <sup>2Cor. 14.</sup> casting down Imaginations, and every high <sup>4, 5.</sup> thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought into the Obedience of Christ. Therefore, I say, Why may not we believe that the same strength is able to do the same works still, and that if we be diligent in endeavouring by sound Doctrine, both to ex-Tit. 1. 9. hort and to convince the gain-sayers, and Chap. 2. preach the things that becomes sound Doctrine, v. 1. 8. and use sound Speech which cannot reasonably be contradicted; that this, I say, shall be effectual for the discovery of the Truth: And that we shall find in the issue, that, Great is the Truth, and stronger than all things, that it endureth, and is alwayes strong, and <sup>1 Esdras 4. 35, 38.</sup> conquereth evermore: Whereas Error (though it appear boysterous and turbulent for the present) yet it shall in the end appear to be weak, and yield the Victory unto Truth.

And

And though for the present it afford us no small trouble in the Church, that men of *perverse mindes* will not see the plain and true meaning of some Scriptures, because they are blinded with *prejudice* and *self-conceit*: yet do we not think that the onely expedient to remedy this, is to *turn Papijs*, both because their Pope hath nothing to shew as a *Commission* for his *Umpirage*, and therefore we should be never the better for appealing to him: and also because we doubt not but the Lord who is pleased to permit these errors for the trial and exercise of our Faith, when we have suffered under them as much as he thinks meet for us, will (without applying our selves to this indirect course) *stablish, strengthen, and settle us*, and every true member of his Church in the right Faith, and that the God of peace will himself tread Satan under our feet shortly.

1 Pet. 5.  
10.

Rom. 16.  
20.

I might add, to make this up weight, the contrary judgements of *Popes* and *Anti-popes*, which have for some time made a great stir in the Church, and must needs be a great distraction to the mindes of them that were bound by their Religion to rest upon the judgement of an *infallible* person, when it was so hard to determine which of the *two contraries* was truly *infallible*. And beside that in the successions in that See, there have been divers that have *contradicted* the judgement of their *Predecessors*; yea, we are not certain, but that the same Pope may the  
next

next year esteem himself infallible in holding that which is quite *contrary*, to what he now doth *infallibly determine*: and these cases must needs *puzzle* the Faith of those that apply themselves to such a judge as may be subject to such *alterations* and *contrariety*. But these things have been so fully and excellently managed by far abler hands, that I shall content my self with giving a brief hint of them. And this I think is sufficient to convince any person of an *unbyassed minde*, That there is neither *necessity* nor *convenience* to invite us to refer our selves to the Pope for deciding of controversies, about the interpretation of difficult Scriptures.

But to proceed: As there are many places of Scripture, which are not easie to be understood; so it behooves us, both to be *industrious* in using the means which God affords us for attaining the knowledge of them; and withal, to be very *modest* in passing our judgements concerning the meaning of them. And indeed it is mostly to be *observed*, that, they are most *confident* of their understanding the darkest places of Scripture, that have very little to support this confidence, but onely that good *Opinion* they have thought meet to entertain of their own *abilities*. And as the Moralist saith of moral and natural knowledge, *Multi ad scientiam pervenissent, nisi putassent se jam pervenisse*: Mens confidence that they are in the  
C right,

right, hinders them from finding out their error, and seeking after the truth: So we may say of spiritual Knowledge, that one great thing which keeps many from the knowledge and belief of the truth, and locks them up fast in the fetters of errors, is that presumption they have taken up, that they are in the right, and that it is not possible they should be deceived; and therefore *Though you bray them in a mortar, yet will not this wisdom depart from them.*

In the interpreting of Scripture it hath alwaies been observed, as a general Rule, that *That interpretation which is nearest to the letter, is the safest and most genuine; and that The further men go from the letter, the more hazzardous path they tread.*

Indeed, if the littoral meaning do either contradict our *Senses* or *Reason*, or be expressly contrary to any other more plain Text, or to the *analogy of Faith*; then we must leave the letter, and look for another meaning, that will not run us upon such *inconveniences*. So when the Prophet speaks of *the calves of our lips*, we must needs qualify it, by rendring it the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, which proceeding from thankful lips and hearts, is more acceptable to God, then the offering of Calves or Lambs was under the old Law. So when the Scripture applies to God, *hands*, and *feet*, and *mouth*, and *eyes*, &c. we must not wick

Hof. 14.  
3.

with the *Anthropomorphita* entertain such gross and absurd conceits of God, as to think him to be a *body*, and endued with such parts of a body as be in us: but we must understand those expressions to set forth unto us, such works of God in the World, as some-what resemble these actions of ours, in which we use those *members* of our bodies as *Instruments*? So when the Apostle saith, *Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*; for as much as in the former verses, the Apostle expressly tells us, that he had *Baptised* some, which he could not have done without a commission; we must therefore understand it, that Christ sent him not *so much* to Baptize as to Preach; even as the same negative particle in other places, doth not deny *absolutely* but *comparatively*: as in that Text, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*. So when the Papists pertinaciously urge the letter of those words, (*This is my Body*) to prove the Body of Christ to be present, in *their sense*, in the *Eucharist*: we say, That forasmuch as this is both contrary to what our *senses* witness, and is a contradiction to *reason*, and also destroys the very *nature* and *end* of a Sacrament; that therefore it is a great injury to the Text, to adhere so pertinaciously to the *letter* of it, and not to qualify it with a milder and more intelligible *construction*.

This then is one extream in which many run on to the *wronging* of the *Scripture*, and

of their own judgements, when they are over-severe in adhering to the letter. And indeed such a pertinaciousness, as it sometimes argues men to be guilty of a fond ignorance, so for the most part it smells of a design: for I have still observed, that they who would be over-strict in sticking to the letter of a Text, when they have conceived it meet to serve their own turn, would be forward enough to run off from the letter, when another interpretation would suit better with their purpose: And therefore it argues that they are not onely deceived themselves, but have a design to deceive others also.

But there are others, who run in another extream, which is equally dangerous, viz. those that, without necessity do, fly to a spiritual or mystical sense, so as quite to reject the literal: and this, as it doth commonly proceed from affectation, and a desire to seem to take notice of something more than vulgar eyes are aware of; so it is, for the most part, used to serve a design, to evade the force of some plain & convincing Scripture, by mudding the water that so themselves and their tenets may escape unseen. Did it not smell of a design in those female teachers, who when that Text was alledged against  
 1 Tim. 2. their usurping of this office, I suffer not a woman to teach; would seek to evade it by  
 11. giving a mystical interpretation thereof, as if by woman should be understood the flesh, by which

which the Apostle will not have us to be taught. But so it is, that too many do not search the Scriptures, to the end that they may conform their own *opinions* and *practices* to this *Rule*, but that they may *warp* the Rule as far as possible, to a compliance with the irregularity of their own *thoughts* and *actions*.

Indeed, it hath always been the practice of the godly Divines and Fathers of the Church, to endeavour to raise up their own and their Readers *Meditations* to high and spiritual things, upon occasion of some historical passage in the Scriptures: and there is no doubt but we may very profitably tread the same steps: but yet we had need to take heed that we be not tempted to follow these *Meditations* or *divine Fancies*, so far that they draw us to an utter leaving and forgetting of the *literal* sense of a Text.

*Origen* of old was accused as faulty in this point: And no doubt but his too much admiring that *Platonism*, in the Study whereof he spent his younger years; and together with that, his over much affecting to soar high in a *mystical* interpretation of Scripture, did, if not draw him to *overreach* in many things, yet induce them that have read his Works, either to draw *erroneous conclusions* from them, which hath been the *unhappiness* of some; or else to condemn his writings as erroneous, as did the se-

*Prid.* Second Council held at Constantinople, An.  
*Synop.* Dom. 532.  
*Goncil.*

And it is great pitty that some amongst the Learned and Eloquent persons of our age, who are great admirers of that Platonick, Philosophy, in which *Origen* was trained up in his youth, and Favourers of those notions of his, which the Church hath condemned as *errors*, have bestowed those choise parts which might have done God and his Church great service, if they had been otherwise imployed, to invent *Cabalistical* interpretations of some pieces of Scripture, which the Church hath in all ages received in the *literal sense*. Me-thinks this danger might easily be discerned to attend upon such attempts, that if we once admit a *Cabala* to interpret the beginning of the *History* of the World (I mean the three first Chapters of *Genesis*) we cannot imagine what should hinder the same spirit from passing the like construction upon the *History* of the Gospel: and so in a while such *projectors* may either begin themselves, or at least induce their injudicious Readers to doubt not onely whether there was any such thing in reality as the Fall of a *Protoplast*, and of us all in him; but whether there were any such things done in reality as those *transactions*, which the Gospel relates, in order to the *reconciling* of God and Man.

I could wish those that make this great stir for *reducing* our Religion and holy Scriptures

ptures to a compliance with *Platonism*, would receive a check by that Grave caution of a late Pious and Learned Bishop, *Caveant ne dum Platonem faciunt Christianum, seipsos ostendant esse minime Christianos.* Bp. Prideaux. Fa. contr. While men attempt to mix Christianity and Platonism together, instead of mending what they conceive to be a mis, they may be in great danger, both to *pervert* their own judgments, and to mud the streams of Doctrine, to the great *prejudice* of those that shall drink of them. They seem already to soar aloft above the *simplicity* of the Gospel; I wish they may be sensible of it before they meet with the success of *Icarus*. And that they may in time employ themselves in the defence of the *ancient* Christian Faith, and beating down of *Atheism*, rather than to bestow their time and pains in preparing *Weapons* to put into the hands of men of *Atheistical* *minde*s, to fight against *Christianity*, and to defend themselves in a *sceptical* or *scornful* neglect of the things that concern their souls everlasting health.

But it is not onely the *Learned*, but many amongst the *unlearned* also, that have made so bold with the Scriptures: And the Apostle tells us, that such are most apt to wrest 2 Pet. 3. 16. the Scriptures to the destruction of themselves and others. Whose heart would not bleed to see this Coat of Christ torn to pieces, every man snatching at some rag or other of it to cover the nakedness of his own conceptions?

We need not *envy*, but rather *pitty* the high conceits that many have entertained of themselves, who will needs undertake the *Apocalypse* to understand it, as well as he that wrote it, before they be well catechised in the first Principles of the Oracles of God. Some we finde *despising* the plainness of the Gospel, as if it were but a dead letter, and as if they had some thing *within* that were a better *light* to walk by, than this *Light* of the Word of God; Others that presume to *advance* the plainness of the Gospel, and make it speak *higher* matters then our meaner understandings can apprehend therein. And indeed, these fancies have not onely flattered such people into errors, but made others also to be at a stand, as not knowing what to do with the Scriptures, nor when they may conclude themselves to have gained a right understanding of them, and fearing lest the letter may rather do them hurt then good, except they have these higher notions of it.

CHAP.



## CHAP. III.

*As in vitious Courses, so also in erroneous Opinions men go from bad to worse. The experience of our age hath sadly confirmed this. The sad pass that many are come to at this day, in matters of Religion.*

**T**He ways of Truth and Virtue are to our corrupt nature like the steep ascent of an high Hill, which we do not recover without much industry and difficulty: But the wayes of vice and error are like the descent, which is not onely easie but precipitant. If a man begin to run down a steep Hill, he cannot stop when he will, but may much endanger himself before he can recover the command of his own motion: Even so men that with great heat of a misguided zeal have set themselves to run down this precipice of errors, cannot set themselves bounds; but are very apt to outrun those limits which they proposed to themselves at their first setting out, and therefore they must needs be supposed to run in a very dangerous course. What Solomon saith of strife, *The beginning of strife is as when* Prov. 17.  
one 14.

*one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention, before it be medled with, may very fitly be applyed to error. Its beginnings are commonly small and modest, but when we have given a little way to it, it will enlarge its passage even beyond the expectation of him that began it: which should therefore make every man afraid to medle with that, which himself shall not be able to command in a while.*

Ezek. 47. The *Waters* of the *Sanctuary* were at first  
4, 5. so shallow, as to be but up to the *ankles*, then they rose up to the *knees*, afterwards to the *loyns*, and at last became a *River* that a man could not pass through. The *Cloud* which the *Prophets* servant saw, was at first in bigness but like a mans hand; but in a while  
1 Kip. 18. it overspread the whole *Heaven*, and poured  
47, 44. forth abundance of *Rain* upon the *Earth*: even so those *Notions* and *novel Opinions*, which in their beginning have seemed so inconsiderable, as not to deserve any great opposition, have proceeded by degrees to overspread the *Firmament*, and to darken the *Sun* of the *Gospel*: those waters which at first seemed so shallow, that a *Childe* might play in them without danger, have by degrees swelled like *Jordan*, so as to overflow all their *Banks*, and to threaten a *deluge* to the *Church* of *God*.

As in vicious practices it hath been observed, that *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*. Men first hearken to the counsel of the ungodly,  
and

and then proceed to *walk in the way of sinners*, till at last they come to sit down in the seat of scorners at God and goodness. Yea so insensibly do men slide into this gulph of sin, that they do not foresee the dangerous course they are venturing upon; but by giving way to vice, do become by degrees so bad, as they could not once have imagined it possible for them to be. When the Prophet foretold *Hazael*, what a bloody man he would be, when he should come to the Kingdom of Syria; he replies, *Is thy servant a dog, that I should do such things?* Psal. I. 13.  
2 King. 8. 13. and it is very likely that he did not imagine while he was a private person, that he could have so much wickedness in him, as by degrees he did manifest when he came to have power in his hands.

And the same we may say of errors in judgement, that men have not onely taken their degrees in them from bad to worse, and so as to outstrip in the succeeding year, the errors which they held the year before, but even to outstrip their own thoughts, and to outgo those bounds and limits that they had set to themselves, in their first entering upon these dangerous courses.

I believe that if any man had been so much a Prophet, as for twenty or thirty years ago, to have foretold to many persons of our age, what they would have come to by this time, they would have replied as *Hazael* did to *Elisha*; yes, if they had but seen the picture

picture of such a *Monster* represented unto them as now themselves are, they would have been the first to have cast stones at it. Those that begun first to scruple at the *Ceremonial* part of the worship of our Church, did little expect to have grown to that pass as to disown that Church in which themselves were born and baptized, as *Antichristian*. Those that were so zealous for the purity of Gods Ordinances, and for the powerful and frequent *preaching* of the Word, as to forsake their own Parishes and go many miles to hear a *Sermon*, did little think that they should have lived to see themselves become *despisers*, and *disowners* of those Ordinances which they then did so highly value, and scorers of that *preaching* which then they followed with so much diligence and pains-taking. Those that began from a sense of the benefit and necessity of that great Christian Duty of *counselling* and *firring up* one another to that which is good, to proceed to appoint some *set-times* for private meetings for such purposes, did little think to have improved themselves so far in spiritual pride and self-conceit, as to venture with *Uzze*, to touch that Ark which

1 Chron. 13. it was onely lawful for the *Levites* to touch, yea with *Uzziab*, presumptuously to rush unto Gods *Altar* and inroach upon the

2 Chron. 26. 17, 18. Priests Office. Much less that they should have gone so far in the way of *Corah* and his company, as to tell the Priests of the Lord,

Lord, that they take too much upon them, and Num. 16. that all the Lords people are holy in the same 3- sense as they, and as fit to dispence Gods Ordinances, as those that were solemnly and orderly set apart to this Office. Those that first began, through the specious pretences of some false Teachers, to scruple the baptizing of Infants, did little think they should have made such progress in giddiness and unsoundness, as to deny any such thing as an outward Baptism (which was so expressly commanded by our Saviour, and sanctified by his own example, and practised without any interruption in the Church of God in all ages) yea, to account the holy Communion of Christs Body and Blood, as a common and prophane thing: to account the preaching of the Word no better then Rom. 10. foolishness (whereas the Apostle represents 14, 17. it as the onely outward and ordinary means for working of Faith, and that which God is 1 Cor. 1. wont to make use of for this end): yea, to 21. esteem the prayers of our Church, as no better then Popish superstition and Idolatry (which were composed by them that laid down their lives for the witness of the Truth against Popish idolatry and error). And in a word, (according to their own prophane expression) to esteem themselves above those Ordinances, which are infinitely above the best of men. Those that first began to raise doubts concerning some points of our Faith, were so short-sighted as not

to see the pernicious consequents of *disturbances* and *unsettlement* in the Church, and did little think to see raked out of the grave most of the *old errors*, which had for so long time lain buried in forgetfulness, that so many of the notions of the old *Gnosticks*, of the *Arians*, *Macedonians*, *Pelagians*, *Socinians*, *Antitrinitarians*, *Antiscripturists*, should have been revived under the notion of *new lights*; while in the mean time, the good old *Orthodox Faith* is anathematized, as *Antichristian*. But such is the deceitfulness of mans heart, and such the subtlety and unwearied industry of that enemy of the Church, that it is an hard matter for men to set bounds to themselves, when once they have transgressed bounds.

To have foretold these things in the beginning of our Civil and Ecclesiastical *confusions*, would have seemed to many *well-meaning*, but *injudicious* people, not onely to have foretold *strange* and *unlikely* matters, but also to have *propheesied evil* and not good, meerly out of *prejudice* against those specious *pretences*. But as the *Maxims of Policy* do shew, and the sad *experience* of our Age doth confirm, that in the Civil State, it is far easier to *find faults* in a Government, then to *exchange* it for a better, and that *Unsettlement* must needs resolve it self into *Anarchy* at last. So in *Church matters*, it hath alwayes been observed to be a dangerous course

course to remove a stone out of the *Foundations* of our Faith, though with never so fair pretences of better *polishing* it, and protestations of *placing* it there again. A man of clear Reason and unbyassed Judgment, might partly have foreseen the tendency of these things, in the beginning: And I hope all succeeding Ages will learn this, from the calamities which we have felt, that it is better for every Christian to exercise his *Patience* in bearing with, and his *Devotion* in praying for, the Reformation of some mistakes and *comings-short* in Church-Government, then to pull down the whole Edifice, under pretence of a *through-Reformation*; lest the *Remedy* prove far more dangerous than the *Disease*.

How sad a pass are we come to in matters of *Faith*! when some talk so presumptuously of a *Light within*, that should be sufficient to lead a man to Heaven, if he walk answerably to it; which must either be perfect *Pelagianism* or *Socinianism*, denying any such depravation of our Natures, as doth disable us from doing that which is good by our own strength; or that there is any such distance between God and man, as should make us stand in need of a *Mediator* to work out a *Reconciliation*: Or else we must take it to be a meer *Meteor*, exhaled by the heat of a *misguided Zeal*, from the *Dunghil* of *Popery*, and elevated unto the middle Region of their *Brain*, the seat of *Fancy*; a Vapour

- pour not well *understood* by them that are *impregnated* with it; a *Tympany*, that swells them up to a conceit that they are *big bellyed* of some great matters, which yet in the bringing of it forth into the World, appears to be like the birth of the *Mountains*: A *Glow-Worm* that is set in the dark to amuse the minds of those that are *Children* in understanding: A *New nothing* blown up like a Bladder, by the *unsavory breath* of men of *putrid Lungs*, and laid in the way to cause men to *stumble* and fall short of Christ, who
- Jo. 14. 6. is the *Way, the Truth, and the Life*. How sad is it to see others turn *Scepticks*, and such as shame not to profess themselves to be to *seek*, whether there be any true *Church* of Christ upon Earth, or any *Ordinances* to be attended on. While in the mean time, both these and the former neglect that *means* of Knowledge whereby they might be *convinced* of their Errors, and *instructed* in the way of Truth; forsake the holy *Ordinances* of God, which He hath appointed us to attend upon, for our own good alway; their *Families* are of the number of
- Jer. 10. 25. those that call not upon Gods Name, either at their lying down and rising up, or at their partaking of the good Creatures of God; which the Apostle tells us are to be
- 1 Tim. 4. 5. received with thanksgiving, and are sanctified to our use, by the Word of God and Prayer.
- It behoves therefore every good Christian to take heed, That he be not drawn away with the
- the

the Error of the wicked to depart from his own *steadfastness*, but to grow in Grace, and in the *Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And those whom God hath let to watch for the souls of others, as they that must give an account, ought to be diligent and faithful in preaching Christ crucified; who though he be to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, yet to them that are effectually called both of the Jews and Greeks, he is Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Not but that we know that the Church of Christ is so built upon a Rock, that all the malice and subtilty, of the gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against it: But yet it is our duty to give testimony to the Truth, whereby, through Gods blessing, those that stand fast may be the more settled, and those that are fallen may be raised up, and we our selves may be clear from the blood of them that wilfully and obstinately resolve to perish.

Acts 3.  
17, 18.

1 Cor. 1.  
23, 24.

Mat. 16.  
18.

Acts 20.  
26.

D

CHAP.



## C H A P. I V.

*An Introduction to the Doctrine of Christ our Mediator, shewing how far the Light of Nature will lead us toward Eternal Happiness, and wherein it comes short. The various acceptions of the Words, Christ, and Mediator, in the Scriptures opened, for preventing Erronious constructions of those places of Scriptures.*

ROM. I.  
20.

THE Apostle tells us, that, *The invisible things of God, even his Eternal Power and Godhead are clearly seen and to be understood by the things that are made. The Philosophers, and as many amongst the Heathens as did improve the Light of Nature, and study the Book of the Creatures as they ought, could not but apprehend that this stately Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, could not be reared up without an Architect; yea, that, Presentem refert qualibet herba Deum, The smallest Creatures that are in the World may convince us that there was some first cause to Create, or produce them upon the*

the Earth. And as every Workman is more noble than his Work, so he that made all Things, must be a more *Noble and Excellent Being*, than any or all of those Creatures: And this was sufficient to convince them that there is a *Being* Infinite in all Excellencies and Perfections, in *Wisdom, Power, Goodness, &c.* who had a Being before any of the Creatures, even from all *Eternity*, and gave beginning and being to all things beside Himself; and this is that *Supream Being* and *first Cause* which we call, *GOD*.

And he that duly considers himself and all Things else to be Creatures, might easily from hence conclude, that this *Supream Being* which gave beginning and being to all things, ought by them all to be Loved, and Served, and Adored, as he, *In whom* Acts 17/28. *they live, and move, and have their being.*

And as Reason binds us to believe the Maker of Heaven and Earth, infinitely to excel the most excellent of all the Creatures; so it must be thought very unreasonable to entertain any *dishonourable* thoughts of God, to subject our *Maker* to our own *making*, or to *carve* out him from the stock of a Tree, who *formed* Us and all other Creatures out of *nothing*: To impute to him those Quarrels, Rapes, Adulteries, Incests, and other Enormities, which the Heathens sathered upon their *gods*. For if we esteem these the fruits of the most *debauched* Na-

tures amongst men, and every man accounts them *faults* wheresoever they are; then, sure, to impute these Acts to that *Supream Being*, that infinitely excels whatsoever is excellent in us, and is free from whatsoever is evil or imperfect in us, must needs be a great wrong to our *Maker*, and to be esteemed no better than a *project* of the sensitive Appetite in man, to *excuse* its own highest enormities, by fancying the same to have been acted by him that made us, and whom we ought, as near as we can, to *resemble* in our Affections and Practises.

Beside, the like exercise of Reason would readily shew us, that the *first Cause* and *Mover* of all things is but *one*, and that to conceit *more than one* infinit Being or *first Cause*, is equally *absurd*, as to believe *none at all*. And consequently they might easily have seen that their *πολυθεϊσμος* was a most *absurd Chimera*, fancied by idle and extravagant brains.

Yea further, Reason might be ready to prompt us, that as we owe our beginning, and being, and whatsoever we do enjoy, to this *first Cause*, the Lord our *Maker*; so we owe to him the best and fairest of those *fruits* that we can possibly bring forth, as a testimony of our *thankfulness* to him, for his favours vouchsafed unto us. And as the infinite *perfections* that are in him, may reasonably be supposed to oblige him to love what is *like* them, and to abhor what is

con-

*contrary*; so whosoever doth desire to please his Maker, must endeavour to be *like him* in his *Imitable Attributes*, of Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and Mercy, &c. and that whosoever doth not endeavour to frame his Heart and Life to a *conformity* to the Nature and Will of God, cannot *please* him, nor be said to answer the ends of his Creation: Nor yet can reasonably expect to *partake* of those rewards which Nature prompts us to hope for from the goodness of God in pleasing him, nor to be *free* from those punishments, which Nature tells us we are to expect to suffer from the Justice of God, in displeasing and provoking him.

Thus far, I say, the *Light of Nature*, and *right Reason*, will easily carry any man who doth not violently disturb it in its proceedings. And from hence the Apostle, in the Ro 1. 20. forecited place, doth conclude, that even *&c.* the *Gentiles*, though they had not enjoyed the written Law of God, yet *would be without excuse before Gods Tribunal*; for that they had not *walked up* to these Dictates of Reason, but had entertained *dishonourable apprehensions* concerning him whom Reason did prompt them to believe to be their Maker: Some of them denying the being of God, others by *multiplying* it, confounding their own conceptions touching a *first cause*: Most of them, by the *impious practices* which they imputed to their gods, dishonouring that God in whose Throne they set these *Idols*:

And all of them, by their own impious and wicked *lives*, coming short of that obedience which the Law of Nature did oblige them to pay to him that made them.

As to this light that shines unto us from the *Heavens*, and all the host thereof, the earth and the *Sea*, and all that therein is, Ps. 19. 3, the Psalmist tells us, *That it is gone forth into the ends of the world, and that there is no Speech nor Language where the voice of it is not heard.*

But that this is not sufficient to lead a man to heaven without a further guide, is evident, both in that the Lord hath thought meet to set up a *clearer Light*, before his own people in all ages, the light of the *Law*, and the *Prophets* to the *Jews*, and the light of the *Gospel* to us *Christians*; which though they differ in the way of *administration*; the services of the *Law* pointing them to *Christ* that was to come, the services of the *Gospel* pointing us to *Christ* as already come; and also in the *clearness* of them, the *Law* representing *Christ* in *Types* and *shadows*, the *Gospel* taking off the *vail* from *Moses* face, 2 Cor. 3. 18. and letting us *with open face, as in a glass behold the glory of the Lord*: Yet I say, That as the light of the *Gospel* is sufficient to us *Christians*, so was the light of the *Law* and *Prophets* sufficient to the *Jews* to point them to *Christ*, who was represented in all their typical *oblations* and *expiations*, and who is the only way to eternal *Righteousness* and  
Sal-

Salvation. Now forasmuch as the great God of heaven and earth, who maketh nothing *in vain*, hath given these further Lights to his people, which would have been *superfluous*, if the former had been sufficient; we may hence conclude, that he did not esteem the Light of Nature *sufficient* to guide us in the way to Heaven.

Beside, This that might be *known* of God by the *creatures*, though it might indeed *shew* us what service and obedience it was reasonable for us to perform unto God, yet could it not *enable* us to perform it aright. Some of the Philosophers have observed so much of a *depravation* in mans nature, as hath made them break forth into *direful* and *tragical exclamations*, concerning the miserable estate of man. But the *light of Nature* could never shew them, without the light of the *Word* of God, the *original* of this Depravation, the creation of the *Protoplast*, and the *Covenant* which God made with him, both in behalf of himself and all mankind; the *fall* of our first *Parents* and of us all in them, from our original Rectitude and Holiness of Nature; nor the way and *means* how to have our Nature *reformed*, and our Persons *reconciled* unto God, and the defects of our obedience *supplied*. *Flesh and blood* hath never revealed, nor is it in its power to reveal this unto us, but the holy Ghost that dictated the Gospel, is that alone

2 Pet. 4.  
12.

which reveals unto us *Christ* and his *Merits*, as our onely propitiation and way to *Salvation*: That there is not *Salvation* in any other, neither is there any other name under *Heaven* given amongst men, whereby we may be saved, but onely this name of *Jesus Christ*.

This one word, *Christ-crucified*, is the *Epitome* of the Gospel, and the end and design of the Law and the Prophets also: the substance of all that we ought to preach, and the Object both of your and our *Faith*. And that we may the better understand this *Foundation* of our Belief, concerning *Jesus Christ* as our Mediator; I shall begin this discourse with opening these two terms, *Christ* and *Mediator*: which I am therefore induced to do, because these terms are used in different significations in the holy Scriptures, from whence men of corrupt mindes, and who have endeavoured to corrupt others, have taken occasion to deduce many *Paradoxes*.

The word *Christ*, I presume is so well understood by the most that are Professors of the Christian Religion, that it would be needless to spend time in the opening of it. In the Old Testament he is called *Messiah*, who in the New Testament is called *Christ*. This name *Messiah* we meet with in several places of the Old Testament, 1 Sam. 2. 10. Psal. 2. 2. and 84. 9. and 89. 51. Dan. 9. 25, 26. Hab. 3. 13. The name of *Christ* is so  
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frequent in the New Testament, that I shall not stand to instance in particular places.

Now this name is sometimes used ( and that most properly ) to denote the *Word made flesh*, or *God manifest in the flesh*; his name is rendered *Jesus, who is called Christ*, and be that denyeth *Jesus to be Christ*, is said to be a *lyar and an Antichrist*, *Jo. 1. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Mar. 1. 16. 1 Joh. 2. 22.*

Sometimes this word *Christ*, is used by a Metonymy, to signifie the Church of Christ, as *1 Cor. 12. 12.* and according to some Divines, in *Gal. 3. 16.* *Is enim est Christi in Ecclesiam amor*, &c. saith Beza upon the place: *Such is the love of Christ unto his Church, that though he filleth all in all, yet is he pleased to esteem himself, as it were, imperfect without his Body the Church: and therefore the Church is called, The fulness of him who filleth all in all, Eph. 1. 23.* To which purpose we may refer these Texts, *Añ. 9. 4. and Mar. 25. 40, 45.* together with *Col. 1. 24.* where *Christ* is put for the Church, which is his *mystical Body*.

Again, that we be not deceived about this Word, we must take notice of some expressions in the New Testament, which have reference to Christ. As first, *To be Christ's*, signifieth *to be a Christian*, *Mark 9. 41. 2 Cor. 10. 7.* *To be subject to Christ*, *1 Cor. 1. 12.* and chap. 3. 23. *To be truly regenerate*, *Rom. 8. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 23.* and *Gal. 3. 29.* and chap. 5. 24.

Secondly,

Secondly, *To be with Christ*, signifies to enjoy blessedness with him, as *Phil. 1.23. comp. 2 Cor. 5.8. Luke 23.43. Col. 3.3. comp. John 17.24. So, 1 Thes. 4.17.*

Thirdly, *To be in Christ*, signifies to be converted to the Faith of Christ, as *Rom. 16.5, 7, 11. Gal. 1.22. Phil. 4.21. Col. 1.2. 1 Thes. 2.14.* Sometime indeed it is taken for an outward cleaving to Christ, as *John 15. 2.* But more usually it is put for a real conversion of the heart unto Christ, as *Rom. 8. 1. 2 Cor. 5.17. 1 Pet. 5. 14. 1 John 2. 5. and chap. 5.20.* So to be found in Christ, signifieth in the Faith of Christ, *Phil. 3.9.*

Fourthly, *To be By Christ*, signifieth to be redeemed by Christ, *1 Cor. 8.6.*

Fifthly, Christ is said to be *in them*, whom he hath sanctified by his holy Spirit, and united to himself as Members of his mystical Body, *John 17.23, 26. Rom. 8.10. 2 Cor. 13. 5.* And Christ is said to be *with them*, whom, though most unworthy, he hath not yet wholly divorced from himself, *Mat. 17.17. Mark 9. 19. and Luke 9. 41.* Or else with those, whom he doth most dearly love, and for this cause, assist and defend, as in *Mat. 28.20.*

Sixthly, *To be without Christ*, is to be without the knowledge of Christ, as the Gentiles which had not had the Gospel preached unto them, are said to be without Christ, *Eph. 2.12.* Sometimes also to be without Christ

*Christ*, signifieth to be without dependance upon *Christ* and assistance from him; as *John* 15.4,5.

To this we may add, that to be weak in *Christ*, sometimes signifieth to be conformable to those infirmities, that were in the humane Nature of *Christ*; 2 *Cor.* 13.4. To be dead in *Christ*, signifieth to be dead in the Faith of *Christ*, as 1 *Cor.* 15.18. 1 *Thes.* 4.14,16. To speak the truth in *Christ*, is to speak it without ambition, and meerly for the glory of *Christ*, as *Rom.* 9.1. and 2 *Cor.* 12.2,19.

These things I thought necessary to point you unto, because many have been apt to wrest these places of Scripture beside the true meaning of them, both to the prejudice of themselves, by inducing a belief of errors, and to the dishonour of *Christ*, by entertaining dishonourable conceits of him, through misunderstanding the Scriptures.

For the word *Mediatour*, it signifieth in general one that interposeth between two or more persons: for, a *Mediator* is not of one, *Gal.* 3.20.

Now in Scripture we sometime read of a *Mediator* to carry messages between two parties. So *Moses* is called a *Mediator*, because he delivered the Commands of God to the people, and the answer of the people unto God, *Gal.* 3.19. comp. *Exo.* 19.3.&c. and chap. 20.19. *Dent.* 5.5.

Besides, Divines speak of a *Conservatory Mediation*,

*Mediation*, which tends to perserve unity and friendship between friends : In this sense some do believe Christ to be a *Mediator*, in respect of the *Eleā Angels*, to procure the *confirmation* of them in their estate of holiness and happiness. But in this, I *determine* nothing, because the holy Scriptures are so sparing in speaking of it

The usual acception of this word *Mediator*, is to signifie him that *reconciles* parties that be at difference : and in this sense Jesus Christ, the *word made flesh*, is truly and properly called a *Mediator to reconcile God and man*, because he interposeth himself between God and us, in this *difference* that sin hath made; to *reconcile* Gods *justice* to us, by making *satisfaction* for our sin; and to *reconcile* us to God by *sanctifying* our natures, and making us conformable to his will; in this life *inchoately*, and at death perfectly.



## CHAP. V.

*The holy Scriptures being owned (at least in outward profession) by men of all professions that lay claim to the common name of Christianity; we may therefore take it for granted, that Arguments drawn from them, should put an end to all strife amongst us. The design and method of the four following Chapters proposed.*

**T**He Reverence we owe to the authority of the holy Scriptures, doth oblige every good Christian, not onely to account it a necessary piece of *humility* to subscribe to the doctrine thereof, as the will and pleasure of him that made us, and to whom we owe all obedience: but also to esteem it the *safest* and most *prudential* course, to entertain and embrace the truths thereof, as the Word of him who is *Wisdom* it self, and therefore cannot err or be deceived, and *Goodness* it self, and therefore we may be sure he will not endeavour to seduce or delude us. So that though there be divers things

things contained in this Sacred Volume, which our shallow capacities cannot reach to comprehend, yet we finde reason enough to impute it to the *defects* of our Nature, and not to any *over-sight* in those Sacred Writings, that we cannot always see a *reason* of every thing therein delivered. And the Sovereign Authority, and infinite Wisdom of him that inspired those holy men that wrote these Books, is a sufficient argument to move us, to a reverent submission to those matters of Faith which surpass the reach of our reason: and therefore as every sober Professor of Christianity makes the Word of God the *foundation* of his Faith; so the best Arguments that can be produced for the *confirming* of our Belief in that Faith, which hath been delivered unto us, will be such as are fetched from this Sacred Promptuary of holy Writ.

Chap. 2. And as I was mentioning it before, for the honour of the Word of God, that men of *all Sects* and persuasions, who center in the common Profession of the Christian Religion, do (at least) pretend great *reverence* to these Writings, and (whether in good earnest, or in *design*, to put off their opinions the more plausibly in the world) do endeavour to represent even their most heterodox and incredible Notions, as the Doctrine of the Spirit of God in the Scripture: we may therefore very reasonably expect that Arguments drawn from the  
Scri-

Scriptures, should be *convincing* to them, and an *end* of all *strife*. And further, that the fair and plain *meaning* of the words of Scripture, which is most *obvious* to every man of understanding, and which hath been received by the Church of God in all *ages* should be embraced by them as well as by us, as the ground upon which all Arguments are to be built: It being as absurd in matters of *Reason* and *Faith*, for one or a few men to expect that his or their single *Vote*, for some singular meaning of a plain Text of Scripture, should be heard in opposition to the *judgement* of the Church of God in all ages; as in matters of *sense* it would be for one man confidently and contentiously to pronounce that colour to be *white* or *red*, which all his Neighbours, and people of all Ages before him, have received under the notion of *black*.

We may therefore take it for granted, that Arguments drawn from the *plain* and *obvious* sense of the Scripture, such as hath been received by the Church in all Ages, should be accounted sufficient, both to *confirm* the faith of those that are serious in Christianity, and also to *convince* (or at least put to *silence*) those that are dissenting from us.

In order therefore to the confirming of us in the belief of this Truth, which is the substance of the whole Doctrine of the Gospel, that, *The Word made flesh, or, God*  
the

*the Son manifest in the flesh, hath truly and really undertaken and performed the Office of a Mediator, to reconcile God and man; I shall propound these four general Heads to be considered and confirmed.*

First, That the Lord did promise to Adam after his fall, and to all the Fathers and Prophets of the Old Testament, *his own Son to become man*, and in the Union of these two Natures, to perform all those Offices which were necessary in order to our Redemption and Salvation.

Secondly, That the Time which was appointed for the accomplishing of these promises and Prophecies, and for the sending of the Son of God into the World, is long since expired; and consequently that we ought stedfastly to believe that our Saviour is already come in the flesh.

Thirdly, That we have full and sufficient grounds to believe, that the same Jesus whom the New Testament holds forth unto us, and in whom we and all the Churches of God in all Ages have believed, is that very Person who was promised to the Fathers, to come as the Messiah or Saviour of the World.

Fourthly, That the Apostles and Evangelists in the New Testament, do hold forth unto us such a Christ, as was really and truly God and Man, Hypostatically united in one Person; and who did in a real and proper sense satisfy Gods Justice for our sins,  
and

and purchase eternal Salvation for us by his Merits.

On this Rock is the Church of God built: On this, have every one of us built our particular Faith, and in this we had need to be fully and perfectly settled. And he that is confirmed in the truth of these four Positions, is confirmed in the whole Doctrine of the Gospel. Let us then proceed by the assistance of the good Spirit of God, to the opening and confirming of them in order.

Matt. 16.  
18.



C H A P. VI.

*The first Proposition confirmed in its two Branches, viz. First, That God did promise to the Fathers of the Old Testament, to send his Son into the World, to take our Nature upon him. Secondly, That he promised that in the Union of these two Natures, he should perform all those Offices which were necessary in order to our Redemption and Salvation.*

**A**LL the Promises of God are Yea, and Amen, Faithfulness and Truth, as being the Words of the God of Truth, who

2 Cor. 1.  
20.

Tit. 1. 2.

E

cap.

Mat. 5.  
18.

cannot lye. Hath he spoken it, and shall it not stand? Hath he promised, and shall he not make it good? Behold Heaven and Earth shall pass away sooner, then one iota or tittle of his Word fail till all be fulfilled. And therefore if we make it appear that such a thing was promised by God to the Fathers, that the Son of God should be Incarnate, to the end that he might be a Mediator between God and man, and the Authour of Eternal Salvation to us; I suppose, no man that reads this, will doubt but that in the fulness of Time, these promises would take effect.

Now that God did all along to the Fathers of the Old Testament, make such a promise, will be evident by considering: First, The Names and Titles that are applied to him that was promised to come as the Messiah, which will shew that he was foretold to be such an one as should be truly God, and truly Man. Secondly, The Offices that are applied to him, which will shew that he was foretold to come as the Saviour of the World.

First, I say, the Names and Titles which up and down the Old Testament, are given to the Messiah that was promised; do shew that, for his Person, he should be God and Man; and some of them also do point at his Office.

Gen. 3.  
15.

1. We find him stiled, *The Seed of the Woman, that should break the Serpents head*: His Humanity is denoted in his being the Seed of

of the Woman; his Divinity in that Office that is ascribed to him, To break the Serpentshead, which may very fitly be interpreted by that expression of the Apostle, *He was manifest to destroy the works of the Devil*: Now no person can enter into the strong mans house, except he be stronger then he. To the same purpose is that other expression, where he is called, *The Seed of Abraham*, in whom all the families of the Earth shall be blessed; which as it foretels his humane Nature which should be born of the Seed of *Abraham*, so it shews that he was to come as a general good to the world, not onely to be the glory of his people *Israel*, but also to be a Light to lighten the Gentiles, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* might, through him, be delivered from that curse which they were liable unto through Sin, and might be partakers of the blessedness that he hath purchased, by his Sufferings and Obedience. And this likewise foreshews that he should be the Son of God, in that his sufferings and obedience, are represented of such infinit value, as to purchase so great and general benefits to Mankind.

2. He is sometimes called by the name of *Shiloh*, by which word is understood the *Messiah*, as is evident by the *Caldee-Paraphrase*, and most of the Ancient Rabbies, who in this place for *Shiloh*, do read *Messiah*. As to the signification of this word, some derive it from *שׁוּלָם* which signifies the Se-

*cundine*, that contains the *Embryo* in the womb; and in this sense it may denote, that the *Messiah* should be born an *Infant*; and also (say some) that he should be born of a *Woman*, without a Natural Father. Others derive it from *שלש* to *send*, and so it may denote his Office, that he should be sent by God the Father into the world, for the *Salvation* thereof. Others derive it from *שלום* which signifies *Peace*; and so likewise it may denote his Office, that he should be the Author of *Peace*, and *Reconciliation* between God and man, and should purchase eternal Happiness for us, and therefore he is called *our Peace*. However we interpret this word, yet still it speaks the *Messiah* to be such a Person, and designed to such an Office, as I said before.

Eph. 2.  
14.

3. He is elsewhere stiled, *A Prophet whom the Lord should raise up to Israel, like unto Moses*; *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet*: this both shews that he should be a real and not a fantastical Person, and it sets before us one of those Offices which he should undertake in order to our *Redemption*: He shall be raised up *in the midst of thee, of thy brethren*; and this shews that he was to be the Son of Man. That this Prophecie belongs to Christ, is evident from *Acts* 3. 22. and Chap. 7. 37.

Deut. 18.  
15.

4. *David* calls him, *The Man of Gods right hand*; and *the Son of man*, whom he had made strong for himself. And this shews both

Psal. 80.  
15.

the

the truth of his Divine Nature, wherein he was *the man of Gods right hand*, the Son of God, equal to the Father in Power and Phil. 2. 7. Glory, in Blessedness and Eternity; and also it foretels that God the Father should prepare him a body in which he might suffer for our sins, and which by the Hypostatical union with the Divine Nature, was made strong to undergo that wrath of God, and to break through the bonds of Death, which no meer man would have been able to do; & likewise by the Union of the Divinity with the Humanity of Christ, his suffering should become of infinit value, and, *This blood of* Heb. 9. 14. *Christ being offered up by the Eternal Spirit,* should be able to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God. Further, David calls him *his Lord*, who was foretold to be *his Son* after the flesh; *The Lord said un-* Ps. 110. 1. *to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool:* now the same person being in different respects *Dauids Son*, and *Dauids Lord*; this shews him to be both the Son of God, and the Son of Man.

5. He is called *Immanuel*, which shews Is. 7. 14. the admirable and unconceivable Union of the Divine Person of the Word: with that flesh that he took upon him, God was pleased to dwell with men on earth, and to pitch his Tabernacle amongst us, in a more near and 12. especial manner, when the Word was pleased to be made flesh. And this stupendious Joh. 1. 14. Transaction was not for nothing, but for

this end that being a middle Person between God and us, *Medium participationis*, one that did partake of both Natures; he might fitly stand as a middle Person, and lay his hand upon us both.

6. We have other Titles given to him in that eminent Scripture, *Isa. 9. 6, 7*, which serve to denote both his Natures and Offices. *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given*: This shews the humane Nature of Christ which should be taken into that near Union with the Person of the Son of God. *And the Government shall be upon his shoulders*; This denotes that Kingly Office which Christ as our Mediator, did undertake: *And his Name shall be called Wonderful*, in regard of the Ineffable Union of the two Natures in the Person of one Mediator; to which agrees that of the Apostle, *Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh*. Further he is called, *Counsellour*, not onely in respect of his divine Nature, which is called *The Wisdom of the Father*, but chiefly in respect of his Office in the Church as our Mediator: he is our Prophet, who is sent to reveal unto us the Will of God and the way to Heaven. He is called, *The mighty God*, which denotes him that was before said to be born of a Woman, to be also God equal with the Father: *The everlasting Father*, or Father of Eternity; not as if the first Person in the Trinity had taken our Nature, or suffered to satisfy his own Justice,

*1 Tim. 3. 16.*

*1 Cor. 1. 24.*

Justice ; but onely to denote the *Eternity* of his Divine Nature, who was our Mediator ; Though as man he was conceived *in-time* in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin, yet as God he was begotten of his Father *before all Words*, even from everlasting. Further, he Eph. 1. 14. is called *The Prince of Peace*, to note the end of his coming, to make Peace between God and us. And finally it is said, that of the Col. 1. 20. *encrease of his government there shall be no end, &c.* to note both the great encrease of his Kingdom, that *Stone cut out of the Mountains* Dan. 2. 35. *without hands, shall fill the earth.* And withal, that his Kingdom shall not be subject to those vicissitudes and decays, to which other Kingdoms are subject. *He shall reign* 1 Cor. 15. 25. *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

7. Further, that evangelical Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 42. 1. calls him *Gods servant whom he did uphold, his Elect in whom his soul delighted.* As to his Divine Nature, he was *God equal with the Father* : but in respect of Phil. 2. 7. this Office of Mediator, as he was *Gods Elect*, whom the Father did choose to appoint and accept as our surety and a propitiatory Sacrifice in our behalf, so he was in some respect *the servant of the Father*, and tells us that he came into the world to *do the Will* Joh. 4. 34. *of his Father.* Nor may we therefore, with the *Arians*, think that Christ's being sent by the Father, and being called his *Servant*, doth argue any *inequality* between the Father and the Son ; nor yet, with the *Macedonians*,

Jo. 15.  
26.

nians, that the holy Ghost being sent from the Father and the Son, this doth argue him to be *unequal* or inferiour to them both. For that Rule in divinity is very rational as well as Orthodox, that *Missio & Obedientia non tollunt equalitatem Personarum in Sacra Trinitate*: The Fathers sending the Son, and the Father and Son sending the holy Ghost, doth not argue the Father to be above the Son, nor them both to be above the holy Ghost; but onely denotes that order in which each person in the Sacred Trinity is pleased to transact its several operations.

Jer. 23. 6.

8. He is termed by *Jeremiah*, *The Lord our Righteousness*: the name *Jehovah*, which is no where in Scripture applied to any Creature, doth argue him to be truly God; and the other word shews the end of his coming into the World, even to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness.

Dan. 9.  
24.

9. The *Messiah* is frequently styled by the name of *David*, *Jerem.* 30. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 23, 24. and chap. 37. 24, 25. *Hosea* 3. 5. To which may be added other places, which are not so express as the former *Psal.* 132. 10. *Isaiah* 37. 35. and chap. 55. 3. *Amos* 9. 11. *Acts* 13. 34. and chap. 15. 16. Now the reason why he is called by this Name, may be either 1. Because he was to be born of the Posterity and Family of *David*, in which respect he is called a *Branch of David*, *Jerem.* 23. 5. and a *Rod of the stem of Jesse*, *Isa.* 11. 1. And in the New Testament, he is said to be raised

raised up in the house of David, Luke 1. 69. and to be made of the seed of David, John 7. 42, Rom. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 8. He is also called, *The root of David*, Revel. 5. 5. and *the off-spring of David*, Revel. 22. 16. 2. Or else he may be called *David*, because the promise was renewed in a special and solemn manner to David, that of his seed should come the Messiah, 2 Sam. 7. and 1 Chron. 17. Or 3. because David was in some sort a Type of Christ, as namely, in that David was both a King and a Prophet, as Christ was King, Priest, and Prophet; but chiefly in respect of his wise and happy administration of his Kingdom and Government. And these Prophecies do betoken both the humane Nature of Christ, who should come of the Seed of David, and his Divine Nature, in that he was to be King of the Church which is called *The Israel of God*.

Gal 6. 16.

10. The Prophet *Zechariah* calls him the King of Israel, which shews both his Power and Authority to rule his Church; and also his Humanity, in that he is said to sit upon an Ass and a Colt, the foal of an Ass. And though Christ did not in his life-time, take upon him the temporal jurisdiction over Israel, but tells his Disciples they were mistaken in looking for this; and tells *Pilate* that his Kingdom was not of this world; that is, according to the fashion of earthly Kingdoms, yet doth he in all ages in a spiritual sense govern his Church, feeding his flock like

Zech. 9.  
9.

Joh. 18.  
36.

*a Shepherd, and ruling his enemies with a rod of Iron.* And further, the same Prophet calls  
 Zech. 13. him *Gods Shepherd*; that is, a Shepherd of  
 7. God the Fathers appointment, and *the man that was his fellow*; which denotes his Divine Nature, wherein he was equal to the Father. And this Shepherd is said to be  
 Mat. 26. smitten, and the sheep of the flock to be scattered from him, which is a Prophecie of what  
 31. Christ in his humane Nature did suffer, as our Saviour himself interprets it.

II. In *Malachi* the last of the Prophets, he is called, *the Lord whom they sought after,*  
 Mal. 3. 1. and *the Angel, or Messenger of the Covenant in whom they delighted.* And as the name *Jehovah*, being here applyed to Christ, doth shew him to be truly God; so the name Angel doth both denote his real existence, and his Office likewise, as being appointed by the Father to ratifie and fulfil that Covenant which he had made with the Fathers, even the Covenant of Life and Salvation, which was expressed in these words, *I will*  
 Jer. 31. *be thy God, and thou shalt be my people.* And  
 31. further, He is called *the Sun of Righteousness, which should arise upon the earth with healing in his wings*: Which denotes both the excellency of his Nature being like the Sun, the most glorious and excellent of all bodies; and likewise the greatness and commonness of his benefits; the Sun is a common good to the world, giving *Light* and *Life* to all Creatures that are capable of it:  
 Mal. 4. 2. and

and so this *Sun of Righteousness* shall come with *healing* in his wings, to all that will receive him, to *heal* the wounds which sin hath made upon the soul, and to *pour in the oyl* of *Isa. 61.2.* Joy and consolation, unto them that mourn in ~~Sion~~ *Sion*.

12. I may add that some conceive him *Prov. 30.* to be understood by *Itbiel* and *Ucal*. *Itbiel* 1. signifieth God with me, and so is to the same purpose with *Immanuel*, and may signify the Union of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ our Mediator. *Ucal* signifieth power and strength, and so may note the strength of his humane Nature, by virtue of the Hypostatical Union of the Divine Person; both to undergo all those sufferings, that were to be laid upon it, and also to give infinite value to these sufferings, that they might make a perfect satisfaction to Gods Justice, as I said before, and be a sufficient price to purchase Eternal Salvation for us.

To these I might add divers other names that are given to the Messiah in the Old Testament, but these are sufficient: and indeed, the very name *Messiah*, as it speaks him to be anointed of God to that threefold Office of *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*, to which Offices men used to be set a-part by the ceremony of *Unction*; so they suppose him to be such a person as should be qualified and made meet for these Offices, and to this end it was necessary that he should be God and Man,

Man,

Man, that he might be a middle person between both.

Having considered his Names & Titles, let us proceed, in the second place, to take a view of what the Old Testament speaks of the *Offices*, to which the *Messiah* was designed by God the Father. And there will be the less need to dwell long upon this, because I have spoken something of it upon the former Head. We commonly believe, that Jesus Christ, in order to the accomplishing of this great business of our Salvation, As he was pleased to stoop so low as to take our Nature into that neer Union with his Divine Person, so that he was both truly God of the substance of his Father, and truly Man consisting of a reasonable soul and humane flesh; So in the hypostatical Union of these two Natures, he did perform the office of a *Prophet*, of a *Priest*, and of a *King* to his Church. And that we may see that we neither wrong Christ in imputing that to him, which may either be dishonourable or disagreeing to him; nor yet our selves or others in entertaining fond and groundless conceits as Articles of our Religion; I shall therefore endeavour to shew you that Christ was promised to the Fathers of the Old Testament, as one that should undertake, and go through with each of these Offices.

First, it was foretold that he should be a *Prophet*, one that should both by his own preaching and the preaching of his Apostles, while

while he was upon the earth, and after his Ascension by giving the holy Ghost to his Ministers, shew unto us the will of his Father, and all things that should be necessary for us, to know, believe, and do in order to our pleasing God in this world, and everlasting enjoying of him in the world to come. This is evident from that promise which God made by *Moses*, *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, and him shall ye hear in all things:* to which agrees that voice which came from Heaven, in our Saviour's Transfiguration. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* Again, the Prophet *Isaiah* speaking in the person of Christ, saith, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord:* And this our Saviour, when he was upon earth, applyed to himself, and told the people that they had then seen that Scripture fulfilled before their eyes.

Secondly, that he should be our High-priest, one that should do that in reality and substance, which was done onely typically by all the Oblations enjoined in the ceremonial Law, that he should offer up an expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice to Gods justice, even his own body, and thereby make an Atone-

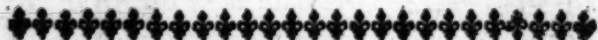
Atonement for us. Surely (saith that Evangelical Prophet) he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. And again, By  
 verſ. 11. his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. And  
 verſ. 12. further, He was numbred with the transgressours, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressours. Of whom the Prophet speaks all this, you may hear from St. Philip's exposition of this place to the Eunuch, and from St. Peter's application of it to our Saviour: Therefore he is  
 Acts 8. 34, 35. called *The Lord our Righteousness*; Jer. 23. 6. and he is said to swallow up death in victory, Isa. 25. 8. and his people are called *The ransomed of the Lord*, Isa. 35. 10.

Thirdly, It was foretold that he should be a King: not that his Kingdom should be of this World, that is, after the manner of worldly Kingdoms, as the carnal Jews did conceit, of which error himself doth convince them. But that he should have such a Kingdom, wherein he should Rule his own people as a Shepherd doth his Sheep, and his enemies with a rod of Iron, so as to restrain their fury against his people, to disappoint their devices, and to dash in pieces  
 at  
 Joh. 18. 36.

at last those that are his implacable enemies. This was foretold by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Behold the Lord shall come with a strong* Isa. 40.  
*band, and his arm shall rule for him: he* 10, 11.  
*shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd: he shall*  
*gather the lambs in his bosom, and shall gently*  
*lead those that are with young.* And by *Da-*  
*vid*, *Ask of me, and I will give thee the hea-*  
*then for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts* Ps. 2. 8, 9.  
*of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break*  
*them with a rod of Iron, and dash them in*  
*pieces like a potters vessel.* So again the  
 Prophet *Jerem.* *Behold a King shall reign and* Jer. 23.  
*prosper, and shall execute judgement and righte-* 5.  
*ousness!* And who is this? but he whom he  
 calls in the next verse, *The Lord our Righte-*  
*ousness.* To this end he is so often called  
*David*, and said to sit upon the throne of his Ezek. 37.  
 father *David*. Not in a literal sense, as 24, 25.  
 some conceit, as if he should come in per-  
 son to Reign upon earth, and set up his  
 Throne in the same place where *David*  
 Reigned, but that he should exercise a spi-  
 ritual jurisdiction over *The Israel of God*, as  
 I have spoken before. To this purpose also  
 is that which *Daniel* speaks of *The God of* Dan. 2.  
*heavens setting up a Kingdom that should never* 44.  
*be destroyed*, which is spoken of the Kingdom  
 of Christ: And that *Zechariah* speaks of thus,  
*Behold thy King cometh unto thee,* Zechar. 9. 9.  
 which is applied to our Saviour, *Mat. 21. 7.*

By all this it is sufficiently evident, to e-  
 very sober and impartial eye, that the Lord  
 did

did promise to the Fathers of the Old Testament, *his own Son to become man, and to be a Mediator between God and man* : and that accordingly the Spirit of God in the Law and the Prophets, hath attributed to the Messiah, who was promised, such *Names and Titles*, as speak him to be such a Person : and withal, that they foretel him to be designed by the Father, to such *Offices* as were necessary to be performed in order to our Redemption and Salvation.



## CHAP. VII.

*The Second Proposition confirmed by nine Arguments, viz. That the time which was appointed by God for the accomplishing of these Promises and Prophecies, and for the sending of the Son of God into the world in our Nature, is long since expired ; so that we are certainly to believe that our Saviour is already come in the flesh.*

**T**Hat God the Father was pleased in his wonderful goodness and tenderness toward Mankind, to make very gracious promises concerning the sending of his own  
Son

Son into the World to be our Redeemer and Saviour, I think hath been made so evident, that he who would go about to cavil at it, must either bid open defiance to the belief of the Law and the Prophets, or if he profess with his mouth that he believeth them, yet he will shew indeed by his wresting of them, that he bears very little reverence to them. Now, as we have seen how the inestimable *love* of God was manifest, in that man had no sooner fallen from obedience to his Creatour, and given him occasion to pronounce that sentence of the Law, which his Justice did shew to be the due desert of sin; but he did presently, even in the midst of judgement remember mercy, and promised unto man a Saviour, that should deliver him from that curse of the Law which was but now denounced: So now let us see the admirable *faithfulness* of God, who hath fulfilled with his hand what he promised with his mouth, and, *When the fulness of time was come, did send forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law.* Gal. 4. 4.

The Apostle tells us that the Doctrine which they preached of Christ, being then already come and crucified for our sins, was to the Jews a *stumbling-block*, and to the Greeks *foolishness*: and we may add, that what he told us before, we have still reason to tell you weeping, that to this day the vail is upon the hearts of the Jews, even a double vail, 1 Cor. 1. 23, 44. 2 Cor. 3. 24.

F

of

1 Thes.  
2 16.

Mat. 27.  
25.

of ignorance and obstinacy: so that though the wrath of God hath come upon this Nation to the utmost, and doth continue to this day, by reason of their crucifying the Lord of Life; yet will they not be sensible of it, but still are ready to cry, as their fathers formerly, *His blood be on us and on our children.* And which is more sad, many even amongst the Professours of Christianity, are waxed so wanton in matters of Religion, that they would be glad to finde out some new lawces to gratifie the vanity of their own appetites; would fain finde some new matters in this great *Mystery of god iness, God manifest in the flesh*, as if the old Doctrine of the Church of God in all ages were so old that it were time to lay it aside. To obviate therefore the growing vanity of those that are so loose in the Profession of Christianity, and to help to establish us all in the belief of that Faith, into which we have been Baptized; I shall endeavour by several Arguments to confirm this Truth, that we are verily to believe the time to be come, and long since past, when the Son of God was to come in the flesh, and to make himself an offering to Divine Justice for our sins.

1 Argument.

First, I argue from the *calling of the Gentiles*, to the Knowledge and Service of the true God. When God was pleased to make choice of *Jacob* and his Posterity for his peculiar people, he gave them several Ordinances

nances and Rites, which the Apostle calls a *middle-wall of partition* between them and Eph. 2. the Gentiles : God having appointed the 14. observation of these to be the cognizance of his own people : so that the Gentiles not observing these, this made, as it were, a partition-wall to separate the Jews from the Gentiles. And if we look into all the Writings of the Prophets, whensoever we finde any thing spoken of the Conversion of the Gentiles, we finde it tyed to the coming of the *Messiah* in the flesh. So when the Prophet speaks of Christ, and the forming of Isa. 49. 6. him from the womb, he saith, *It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Judah : I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my* Isa. 60. 3. *Salvation to the ends of the earth.* And afterwards speaking of the coming of Christ, he saith, *The glory of the Lord shall arise upon the earth : and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and the King to the brightness of thy rising.* I might instance in many other Prophecies, concerning the Conversion of the Gentiles, all which do foretel its coming to pass about the time of the coming of the *Messiah* in the flesh : who was to *break down the middle-wall of partition that was between us, and so of* Eph. 2. 14, 15. *twain to make one people.*

Now that the Gentiles have been many of them long since turned to the knowledge and obedience of the true God, is evident : Christ himself preached the Gospel to the Joh. 4. woman

man of *Samaria*, and afterward to the whole City, and many of them believed in him : And afterwards we finde that divers of the Apostles went and preached the Gospel to the Gentiles : yea, *St. Paul* is expressly styled

Eph. 3. 2. *The Apostle of the Gentiles* : And he saith, *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not of the*

Rom. 3. 29, 30. *Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also : Seeing it is one God that will justify the circumcision by Faith, and the uncircumcision through Faith.* We read in the New Testament, of the Churches of God, at *Rome*, at *Corinth*, at *Galatia*, at *Ephesus*, and many other places, which before were Heathenish places. Yea, to go no further then this our Island, which was sometime of the number of the Gentile Nations ; yea, of the remote parts of the Gentiles : and yet, as we know that at present we do worship the true God ; so the Histories of our Nation do report that we have been turned from Idols near 1600 years ago, which argues the *Messiah* to be long since come.

2 A gu-  
ment.

Secondly, we argue from the destruction of the second Temple built at *Jerusalem* : The *Messiah* was promised to come into that Temple, and therefore that Temple being long since destroyed, it argues him to be long since come. We read, that when the Foundation of this later house was laid, *Many of the ancient men, who had seen the former house*, went to see how far this came short of the first ; and this did discourage the people

Ezr. 3.  
12.

people from going on with the Work. Upon this, God sends the Prophet *Haggai*, to encourage them to go on, and he speaks thus: *Who is left among you that saw this house in its first glory? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, &c.* And how doth he incourage them? *I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this house with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts: And the glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former.* You see then that the latter Temple was promised to excel the former: And how should that be? Not for famous structure, for as to this it came so far short of it, that it seemed in their eyes in comparison of it as nothing: nor was it so glorious as to the Vessels of the Temple, for there were five things wanting in this latter Temple, which were in the former: The Ark, the Mercy-seat, the Tables of Stone, wherein God with his own hand wrote the Ten Commandments, the Urim and Thummim, and the holy anointing Oyl: Now sure it must be some great thing that could make up all these wants, and render the Glory of the latter Temple, greater than that of the former. Now as to this, the Prophet tells us, that the desire of all Nations, that is, Christ who was desirable to all Nations, as he in whom all the Families of the earth should be blessed, He should come into this Temple to teach and work Mi-

raclcs there, and this should make it more glorious. The former Temple had *Solomon* to pray and offer Sacrifice in it, but a greater than *Solomon* was in this latter Temple.

Mal. 3. 1. So also *Malachi* tells them, *Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare my way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into his Temple: even the messenger of the Covenant in whom ye delight.* This Angel or Messenger of the Covenant is the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is promised to come into this Temple; and therefore we must conclude, that his coming must be before the utter destruction of this Temple. Now it is sufficiently evident, that this

Euchol. Chronol. hath been utterly destroyed near 1600 years ago: for it was in the 71 year of Christ that *Titus* took the City, and set fire upon the Temple, and ever since it hath lain desolate; yea, when *Julian* the Apostate, in despite to the Christian Religion, gave the Jews liberty and encouragement to rebuild the Temple; there was an earthquake which so shook the foundation that they had laid, that it left not one stone upon another: and when for all this they obstinately persisted in attempting to build the Temple, God sent a fire from Heaven which consumed divers of the Builders. And therefore seeing that Temple is long since destroyed, the *Messiah* is undoubtedly long since come.

Sozomen.

Thirdly, I argue from the *Scepter's* being departed

*the Gospel Asserted.*

71

departed from *Judah*; the government, even <sup>3 Argu-</sup>  
all face of a government being departed <sup>ment.</sup>  
from that Nation. *Jacob* in blessing his  
Sons, tells *Judah* that *The Scepter should* <sup>Gen. 49.</sup>  
*not depart from him, nor the law-giver from* <sup>10.</sup>  
*between his feet, till Shiloh should come.* This  
place is frequently urged for the conviction  
of the pretent Jews, and to which indeed  
they can oppose nothing, but a resolute and  
stiff-necked obstinacy. That by *Shiloh* is  
understood the *Messiah*, I have shewed al-  
ready, and the Jews themselves confess it.  
And for the precise time when the Scepter  
departed, we need not to be very nice in  
enquiring. *Judah* was governed by *Kings*, <sup>Joseph.</sup>  
by the space of 514 years in all. At the <sup>Antig.</sup>  
end whereof they were carried away *Cap-*  
*tives* into *Babylon* by the space of 70 years.  
After this they had *Governours* for divers  
years: then the *Maccabees* held both the  
Government and High-Priest-hood for four  
successions. Then *Azibobulus* the first made  
himself *King*, and so the Posterity of the  
*Maccabees* held both the Kingdom and  
Priest-hood, till the days of *Herod* the Son  
of *Antipater*: He slew *Hircanus* and *Ari-*  
*stobulus*, the last of the *Asmonean* Family, and  
also many of the Jewish *Sanhedrim*, and en-  
joyed the sole Government and Kingdom of  
*Judea*. And now many thought that the  
Scepter was departed from *Judah*: for  
*Herod* was a stranger born, who had the  
Government, and therefore many did now

begin to look for the Messiah. Some were such flatterers of *Herod* that they perswaded him that he was the Messiah, and thence (say some) came that Sect of *Herodians* mentioned in the Evangelists. There was also one *Theudas*, not long before Christ, who boasted himself to be the Messiah, and drew a company of people after him, but was destroyed with those that followed him. And after him arose *Judas of Galilee* in the days of taxing; *Josephus* saith, this man arose in the time of the gathering of that Tax, which was levyed by *Augustus* when Christ was born, and some conceive those *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices, to have been followers of him. And divers others have arisen since, who have boasted themselves to be the Messiah. So that though the generality of the Jews rejected Christ, yet many of them did follow false christs; as himself told them, *I am come in my Fathers name, and ye receive me not: if another man come in his own name, him ye will receive.* Thus you see how many of the worse sort of the Jews, believing the Scepter to be already departed, did follow false christs: but if we look further, we shall find that many of the devout sort amongst them did begin now to expect the coming of the Messiah: So we read of *Simeon* that he waited for the consolation of Israel; and *Anna* spake of Christ to all them that looked for Redemption in *Jerusalem*: and *Joseph of Arimathea*

Acts 5.

36.

pers. 37.

Luke 13.

2, 3.

Joh. 5. 43.

Luke 1.

25.

pers. 38.

*thea* is said to have waited for the Kingdom of *Luk. 2:*  
 God; that is, the coming of the Messiah. *51.*  
 So that it is evident, that many of the Jews  
 did now think the Scepter to be departed  
 in the days of *Herod the King.*

Others say that there was some kinde  
 of government (though much shattered  
 and broken) till the time when the City  
 was destroyed: but, granting this, it is evi-  
 dent, as I shewed before, that the City was  
 utterly destroyed, and the people reduced  
 into a Roman Colony, and the very face of  
 a Common-wealth utterly abolished a-  
 mongst them well nigh 1600 years ago: And  
 therefore we may firmly conclude, that the  
 Messiah is long since come.

Fourthly, I argue from the *breaking and 4 Argu-*  
*decay of the fourth Monarchy* (spoken of by *ment.*  
*Daniel the Prophet.* *Nebuchadnezzar* in  
 his dream saw an Image, whose Head was  
 of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly *Dan. 2.*  
 and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, the feet  
 part of iron, and part of clay. In this Image  
 were represented to the King the Govern-  
 ments that should be in the World. The  
 Head of gold did signifie the *Babylonian* or  
*Assyrian Monarchy*, which was a very glorious *vers. 38.*  
 Kingdom; after which succeeded the King-  
 dom of the *Medes & Persians*, when *Cyrus the*  
*Persian* overcame and slew *Belsazzar*, the last  
 of the *Assyrian Kings*: this was also a great  
 Kingdom, but came as far short of the glory  
 of the *Assyrian Kingdom*, as silver comes  
 short

- Ver. 39. short of the worth of Gold; and it is compared to *two Arms*, because there were two Nations joyned, the *Medes* and *Persians*. After this arose a third Monarchy, viz. of the *Grecians*, when *Alexander* the great conquered *Darius*, the last King of the *Persians*, this was the thigh of *Brass*. After this it is said, that a *fourth* Kingdom should arise, which should be a very strong Kingdom, and therefore is compared to *legs of Iron*.
- Ver. 40.

Ver. 44. Now whereas the King saw that a *Stone* cut out of the *Mountain* without hands, should break to pieces all this Image, and afterward grow to a great Mountain, he saith, that in the dayes of these Kings, that is, the Kings which should be of the fourth Monarchy, The God of Heaven shall set up a Kingdom which never shall be destroyed, and it shall break in pieces all those Kingdoms; and consume them, and it self shall stand up for ever. This is understood of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, who is compared to a Stone cut out of the Mountain without hands. Christ is called

Isa. 28. 16. by the Prophet, a *Stone*, and he is said to be cut out without hands; that is, say some, he was conceived in the womb of the blessed Virgin, without the help of a man: But others (and perhaps more probably) think this to belong to the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, which should be set up or propagated, not by the power and policy of man, as other Kingdoms were, but by the Almighty power of God alone. This

This Kingdom of the Stone, we see, was to begin in the time of the fourth Monarchy; Now what this fourth Monarchy was, is variously interpreted: but which interpretation soever we imbrace, this Argument will be sufficiently cogent.

When *Alexander* the Great was dead, his Dominions and Kingdoms, fell into divers mens hands: *Antigonus* was Lord of *Asia*, *Seleucus* of *Babylon*, and the bordering Nations: *Lyfimachus*, had *Helleſpont*: *Cassander*, *Macedon*; and *Ptolemy*, the son of *Lagus*, held *Egypt*. After a while, these five Kingdoms were reduced into two, viz. The Syrian Kingdom, which was called the Kingdom of the *Seleucida*; and the Egyptian Kingdom, called the Kingdom of the *Ptolemies*; and these some take to be the legs of Iron, and the feet, part of Iron, part of Clay. But according to this computation, the fourth Monarchy was gone somewhat before the birth of Christ; for *Cleopatra*, who was the last Queen of *Egypt*, was overcome by *Octavius Caesar*, divers years before Christ was born.

Others say, that this fourth Kingdom was the Roman Monarchy, which had ten Toes, that is, so many Forms of Government. Now in the time of this Monarchy Christ was born, viz. in the days of *Augustus Caesar*: It is an Observation of a Learned man, that, *ver. 35.* there is a two-fold Kingdom of the Messiah described; first, the Kingdom of the Stone,

*Josephus*  
*Antiq.*  
*Sir Walt.*  
*Rawley.*

*M. Legh.*

*Stone*, and then the Kingdom of the *Mountain*. The Stone shall first break in pieces the Gold, the Silver, the Brass, the Iron and Clay; and then grow up into a Mountain: That is, Jesus Christ, when he shall come, shall break in pieces all those 4 Monarchies, and afterward his Kingdom shall fill all the Earth. And so we know that while the *Roman* Kingdom stood in its strength, the Kingdom of Christ was but small, it was then the Kingdom of the *Stone*, but afterward it became a *Mountain*; the Doctrine of the Gospel then spread into all the world; while the *Roman* Emperors flourished, the most of them persecuted the servants of Christ, and endeavoured to hinder the Promulgation of the Gospel; but afterward when their power was cut short, the Kingdom of Christ flourished: The sum of the Argument is this. There were *four* Monarchies to be erected by the God of Heaven in the world; In the dayes of the *fourth* Monarchy, Christ was to be born, and his Kingdom set up. Now whether we take this fourth Monarchy for the Successors of *Alexander* the Great, or for the *Romans*, both these are long since decayed: and therefore surely the Messiah is come in the flesh.

5. Argu. Fifthly, I argue from the expiring of the  
 Dan. 9. *seventy weeks*, spoken of, in Dan. 9. 24. to  
 24. to the the end of the Chapter: which you may read  
 end. at your leasure. It is generally agreed upon, that this is a Prophecy concerning the  
 time

time of the birth of the Messiah, and concerning his death, and the end for which he was to die; and the Text speaks plainly, that these weeks were determined, to finish transgression, and to make an end of Sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; now this can be done by no other but by him that was the Saviour of the world: Yea, the name Messiah is twice mentioned, so that undoubtedly this is a Prophecie concerning the coming of the Messiah.

Now as to what is meant by the *Seventy weeks*; it is thus agreed upon, that every day goes for a year, so that seventy weeks are Seventy times seven years, that is, 490 and 90 years; and it is said, that the beginning of these seventy weeks, should be from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. Now here lyes the great difficulty when this time was, for the Jews had four several times Commandment to build the City and the Temple: The first was from *Cyrus*, in the first year of his reign: The second from *Darius*, the son of *Hystaspis*. after it had been some time hindered by *Cambyfes*: The third was given to *Ezra*, by *Artaxerxes Longimanus*: The fourth & last was given to *Nehemiah*, who was Butler to the King. This commandment was given out in the dayes of *Artaxerxes*; whether the same that gave the commandment to *Ezra*, or another of the same name, I cannot find determined.

Now

Verf. 23.

Ezra 1.  
1, 2.

Ezra 6.

Ezra 7.  
12.  
Neh. 2.

Now being it is not specified in *Daniel*, from which of these times the seventy weeks should begin, therefore there is some difference amongst Interpreters, and Chronologers, concerning it: Some make it to begin from that commandment given to *Ezra* from *Artaxerxes*, after which the work went on without Lett, for we do not read that ever this Decree was revoked. And in my opinion this seems most probable: For both *Bucholtzer*, and whosoever wrote the Chronology in the Margin of *Josephus Antiquities*, say, that from the time of this commandment to *Ezra*, to the death of Christ are near about four hundred & ninety years: And so this computation answers to that expression in *Daniel*, that, *after seventy weeks the Messiah should be cut off*. Now, say we, Christ was born in the second year of the sixty six week, and the thirty four year inchoat, which he lived upon Earth, make up just the number of seventy weeks, and so the Prophecie was exactly fulfilled, beginning from the third commandment which was issued out for the building of the City.

Dan. 9.  
25.

Others there are that begin these weeks thirty seven years later, viz. in the second year of *Darius Nothus*, and so make them to end just at the time when *Jerusalem* was taken and destroyed by *Titus*, led, I suppose, by these words; *And the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood,*

Ver. 36.

flood, and to the end of the war desolations are determined. But if we grant this, yet the seventy weeks are at an end many hundred of years ago, the City being destroyed (as I said before) about the seventy one year of Christ. The sum of the Argument is this: These seventy weeks denote the number of 490 years, within which time the Messiah must be born and cut off: But these seventy weeks or 490 years, are ended many hundred of years ago: and therefore the Messiah is long since come.

Sixthly, I argue from the *ceasing of the 6 Argu-  
Sacrifices*, which were appointed by the ce-<sup>ment.</sup> remonial Law, and extinguishing of that Priest-hood. That those Sacrifices were to continue, and consequently the Priest-hood that was to offer them, until the coming of the Messiah, and then to cease, may be evident from that Text, *Sacrifice and offering* Psal. 40.  
*thou didst not desire, mine ear hast thou heared: in* 67.  
*burnt-offerings and sin-offerings thou hast no de-  
light: Then said I, Lo I come.* When Christ should come in the flesh, then God declares that he would no more take delight in burnt-offerings and other oblations and expiations which were used under the Law. And that this Prophecie is to be applied to our Saviours coming in the flesh, is evident, by the Apostles exposition of it. *Wherefore when he,* Heb. 10.  
*that is, Christ, cometh into the world, he saith,* 5,6.  
*Sacrifice and offering, thou wouldest not, &c.*  
And a little further, *He take away the first* vers. 9.  
*that*

that he may establish the second. Christ by the once Offering up of himself as an expiatory Sacrifice for our sins was to put an end to all those legal oblations, which were Types of this great Oblation. Beside, the Prophet Daniel saith, that when the Messiah should come, He should cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to cease. Indeed the very end and signification of all those Sacrifices did shew that they were to be abolished at the coming of the Messiah, who was the true Sacrifice for sin: God did not set them up that men might rest in them, or expect pardon of sin by them. The Law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those Sacrifices which they offered year by year, make the comers thereto perfect, for then should they not have ceased to be offered. And further, It was not possible that the blood of Bulls and Goats should take away sin. All these Sacrifices did serve to shew them, that Without shedding of blood, there was no remission of sin; and did thereby teach them to look unto that Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, for justification and Salvation: and therefore, when Christ the true Sacrifice was offered, and not before, these Sacrifices were to cease.

Now it is evident that these Sacrifices are long since quite ceased, the City of Jerusalem, and the Temple being long since destroyed: and this was the place where alone he had appointed them to offer Sacrifice: and

Deut. 12.  
5.

Dan. 9.  
27.

Heb. 10.  
1.

vers. 4.

Heb. 9.  
22.

Joh. 1.  
29.

and therefore seeing he hath suffered this Place to be utterly destroyed, it argues, that it was his pleasure, that these Sacrifices should cease to be offered: *For this man* (that is, Jesus Christ) *by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* The continual offering of Sacrifices under the Law did shew the imperfection of them, that they could not perfectly justify those for whom they were offered: Now what these Sacrifices, through their weakness were not able to do, God sending forth his own Son, made under the Law, and made a Sacrifice for sin, hath perfected. So that from the ceasing of these Sacrifices which were appointed as Types of Christ, we may conclude, that the Messiah the substance of all these shadows is already offered up for us.

Heb. 10.  
14.

Seventhly, I argue from the *abolishing of* <sup>7 Argu-</sup> *the power of the Heathen Idols,* and its <sup>ment.</sup> *lencing of their Oracles.* It was foretold that when the Messiah should come, he should destroy the Idols of the Gentiles which before had been of so great power and credit. *The idols he shall utterly abolish* (saith *Isaiah*) *and they shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day shall a man cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold which they have made, to the Moles and to the Bats.* And

Ma. 2. 18,  
19.

G

the

Zech. 13.  
1, 2.

the Prophet Zechariah, speaking of the time of Christ's coming, when the Fountain should be set open for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in; for sin & for uncleanness: he adds, It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: And also I will cause the Prophets, and the unclean spirit to issue out of the land. You see then that it was prophesied, that at the time of Christ's coming in the flesh, the power of the idols should decay, and the Oracles of the Heathen-gods be struck dumb.

Some of  
Oracles  
continued

for several

years after

the Death

of Christ.

See to this

purpose

Fontenelle

History of

Oracles.

S. Geo.  
Sands  
Travels.

Now this is long since come to pass: That which made the Idols of the Heathen to be in so much request, was, that the Devil did many times enter into them, and speak out of them, and shew strange feats before them: But this power of the Devil was taken away long since. The great Temple of Apollo, and the Oracle at Delphos that was so famous all over the world, is long since abolished. It is related, that neer about the time when Christ was born, Augustus Caesar sent to enquire of the Oracle, and it told him that he could receive no Answer from him, for there was a Child born in Judea, who commanded him from those shores: and this was the last voice that was heard from that Temple. And it is written by an Author of this Nation, that a Merchant-ship sailing neer those coasts, those that were in it heard an hideous howling noise, and one

one call to the Master of the Ship by name, and bid him tell, when he came to the shore, that the great god *Pan* was dead. Now the silencing of these Oracles doth shew the *Messiah* to be come.

Eighthly, I argue that the *Messiah* is come, <sup>8 Argu- ment.</sup> because the *Genealogies of the Jews* are so *found*, that it is impossible to find out the Ancient Posterity of *David*. Christ we know <sup>Iſa. 11.1.</sup> was promised to come of *the Seed of David*, in divers places of the Prophets: And hence we may argue, That if God had so punctually foretold the Family of which the *Messiah* should be born, then sure he would take special care to keep the Pedegrees so orderly that it might be known of what Family Christ's Mother was, that we might be the better confirmed in our Faith, that He which did come was the true *Messiah*. And it is evident that Gods providence did take great care to keep the Families distinct, that each man might know his own Pedegree: To this end he commanded, <sup>Num. 36.</sup> That a man of one *Tribe*, should not marry a wife of another *Tribe*, <sup>6,7,8.</sup> but that every man should marry in his own *Tribe*. And to this purpose it is thought, that Commandment was given forth, that the younger Brother should marry the *Relict* of <sup>Deut. 25.</sup> his elder Brother, who died without issue. And <sup>5.</sup> the *Jews* are said to be so careful of this, <sup>Josephus Antiq.</sup> that every family had its own Pedegree upon Record, which Records were kept in the Archives at *Jernsalem*.

Now *Herod* the King seeing how much the *Jews* valued their descent from *David*, and other such like Worthies; and knowing that himself was not a *Jew*, but a stranger born; caused all those Books to be burned, in which the Pedegrees were recorded, hoping thereby that the Families would be confounded, and his own base descent should after some time be forgotten. Now since this time, these Records being lost, the Genealogies are confounded; so that, though some few did know their Pedegrees for a while, yet now they are so forgotten, that no man can directly tell of what Family he is.

And therefore if God by his Providence did preserve these Records so long, that it might be known that Christ came of the House of *David*, and did then suffer these Records to be utterly destroyed, and the Families to be confounded; then may we from hence conclude, that the true *Messiah* is long since come in the flesh.

9 Argu-  
ment.

Lastly, There is another Argument urged by some, which though it be not of very great force to a Christian, yet is it sufficient to stop the mouth of a cavilling *Jew*, as being *ad hominem*, an Argument drawn from their own principles. The Argument is this: The *Jews* have a Tradition amongst them, that as God made the world in six dayes, and then rested the seventh; so the world should stand six thousand years, and then keep an everlasting Sabbath. Now of these

these six thousand years, they say, that two thousand should be before the Law was given; two thousand under the Law; and two thousand under the Messiah. Now the four thousandth year of the world is long since past. There are divers Opinions of *Chronologers* concerning the precise time of Christs birth, which I shall not think needful to be here set down: But according to the computation of most of them, the birth of Christ fell out not very far distant from the four thousandth year of the world; and this might perhaps be one reason why so many of the *Jews*, did about this time expect the coming of the Messiah, and followed divers false Christs, though they forsook the true One. But without doubt these four thousand years are long since expired, and therefore according to their own Tradition, the Messiah is long since come in the flesh.

We have seen the point proved positively: Let us next consider one of their chief Objections against the believing of the Messiah to be come.

They say that *their sins have hindred the* *Object* ; Messiah from coming at the time which was appointed. The calling of the *Gentiles*, the ceasing of the Sacrifices, the destruction of the second Temple, the departing of the Scepter, but especially the Prophecie concerning the Seventy weeks, do so urge them, that they can hardly deny, that the time fore-appointed is long since past:

But they say, that the sins of their Nation have hindred the accomplishing of the promises at the appointed time.

*Answer.* But this is a very weak refuge to flie unto: For,

First, the sins of *their Fathers* did not hinder the making of these promises, and why should they think that the sins of the Children should hinder the fulfilling of them in due time? The bestowing of Christ is the freest of all gifts: God doth not give him for the deserts of any people. It was not for the merits of those to whom he was promised, that God made these promises, and therefore the demerits of the Children could not hinder the accomplishment of them.

Gen. 3.  
15.

The first time when God made this promise to *Adam*, was, when there was nothing in man to deserve it; yea, the greatness of mans sin which he had but newly committed, might have made God far from shewing any Mercy: So, when God renewed

Deut. 18.  
15.

it by *Moses* to the Israelites, it was at that time when they shewed themselves a most unthankful & rebellious people, who grieved the Lord forty years in the wilderness. And when the Prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah, it was in a time of great Wickedness among the people: That promise *Isa. 7. 14.* was made in the days of *Ahaz* the worst of all the Kings of *Judah*; and *vers. 13.* he tells

*Jer. 23.* them, that they had even wearied the Lord  
25. 6. with their sins. So, that other was made in  
the

the days of *Jeconiah*, when the land was so filled with wickedness, that the earth groaned under its inhabitants, till God eased it by sending them into Captivity. Now if the abounding of sin in the Fathers did not hinder the making of these promises; it is very unreasonable to imagine that the sins of the Children should hinder the fulfilling of them at the time appointed.

Secondly, the promises concerning the Messiah were *absolutely expressed*, without any respect to the worthiness or unworthiness of the people. *Jacob* doth not say, If the people be obedient, *Shiloh* shall come when the Scepter departs, but speaks it absolutely. The *seventy weeks* are said to be determined; not conditionally, if the people did please God, but absolutely. And if the sins of the people did not hinder the fulfilling of other Prophecies of this Nature, why should they be thought to have hindered this? Doubtless, this is but a Cavil invented by the Jews of latter ages: for their fathers that lived about the time of Christs Birth, did look upon them as absolute, and did expect the Messiah about that time, as I shewed before; and this cavil is only invented to defend the obstinacy of this Nation at this day. Nay, let us hear what a promise the Psalmist mentioneth, *If the children of David do break my laws and keep not my commandments, &c. then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their sins with stripes;*

Gen. 49.  
10.

Dan. 9.

Psal. 89.  
30, 31, 32.

nevertheless my loving kindness will I not take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail: my Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gon out of my lips. And this must needs be understood of the Covenant concerning the sending of the Messiah: so that their sins could not hinder the fulfilling of it in due time.

- Thirdly, the Messiah was promised to be a blessing to all Nations, and therefore the sins of one Nation could not hinder the sending of him in due time. God promised Abraham, that in his seed all the Nations of the earth should be blessed: and Isaiah, speaking
- Gen. 21. 16. from the Lord unto Christ, saith, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the Tribes of Judah; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my Salvation to the ends of the earth: The Gentiles were to receive benefit by his coming into the world, as well as the Jews, as I have before shewed: and therefore it would be unreasonable to imagine that the sins of that one Nation should hinder the coming of Him, who was to be a blessing to all Nations. God saith, The soul that sinneth shall dye; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. Now if God will not punish the sins of the father on the son, who is not accessory to his father's faults;
- Ezek. 18. 20.

faults; much less will he punish the sins of the *Jews*, upon all the whole world, who were not accessory to their sins.

Fourthly, The Messiah was promised to Dan. 9. come for this end, that he might take away <sup>24.</sup> sin, to finish Transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness; and to be wounded for our Transgressions, &c. as I have said before: And therefore why should we think that the abounding of sin should hinder his coming? Doth the sickness of the Patient hinder the Physician from coming, whose office is to cure Diseases, and there would be no need of him if men were not sick? Yea some of the Learned do tell us, that the Jewish Rabbies that lived before Christ, did foretel that when the Messiah should come, there would be a great abounding of Iniquity in the world; and therefore we may conclude this to be onely a Cavil of the later *Jews*, to excuse their obstinate slighting of the true Christ whom their Fathers crucified. Isa. 53. 5.

As for that fond conceit of some of the *Jews*, who say that the Messiah is indeed come, but is hidden at the gates of Rome, and that it shall be some time before he be discovered: This is so far lighter than vanity, that I shall take no further notice of it, then to put you in mind thereby of that heavy curse of God that lies upon them; That though the Prophet *Malachi*, for about Mal. 3. 1. two thousand years ago, did tell them, that  
the

*the Lord should suddenly come into his Temple, yet they will believe that he is still to come. Yea, though they have felt the heavy wrath of God lying upon them to the utmost, for so many Ages; yea, though their condition be so sad, that they have no Prophets to tell them how long it shall last, yet still they persist in denying and opposing the true Christ. Let us pray for their Conversion, and endeavour to be settled our selves in this Article of the Christian Faith, that the Messiah who was promised to the Fathers, is long since come in the flesh.*

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CHAP.



CHAP. VIII.

*The third Proposition, viz. That we have full and sufficient Grounds to believe, that the same Jesus which is held forth unto us in the New Testament, and in whom we and all the Churches of God in all Ages have believed, is that very Person who was promised to the Fathers to come as the Messiah, or Saviour of the World; Confirmed by the Miracles which he wrought to confirm this Truth, and by the fulfilling of all Prophecies in him.*

**T**Hat a Saviour was promised to the Fathers of Old, and that these promises are long since out of date, you have seen confirmed; so that consequently we must look backward with the Eye of our Faith, to a Christ already exhibited, and not forward to one yet to come. The next thing in which it will be necessary to have our Faith settled, is, that we are not deceived, as to that particular Person, upon whom we and all the Churches of God, for this sixteen

teen hundred years and upward, have pitched, as our Messiah or Saviour. And though the consent of the Church in all Ages, be a very good Argument to satisfy us in this point, yet it may be necessary in these sickle times, to look for a firmer Ground to build our Faith upon, in this which is a matter of so great moment.

1 Argu-  
ment.

First then, I argue from the many *Miracles which Jesus wrought*, when he was upon the Earth; for the confirmation of this Truth, that he was indeed the Messiah that was promised. A *Miracle*, is a work that exceeds the power of any created cause, to produce by his own strength, and therefore whosoever can do miracles, is either God, or hath received power from God in a special and supernatural manner. And as Gods giving power to any person to work Miracles, for the confirming of any point that he teacheth, is to be accounted as Gods setting his Seal to the truth thereof: So it would be unreasonable, as well as impious, to imagin that the God of Truth should set his Seal to a ly; and consequently whatever Doctrine hath been confirmed, by the the working of apparent and undeniable Miracles, we are to receive it as that which God himself hath commended to us as a Truth, and himself born witness of it.

Indeed to determin what is the utmost that is in the Power of Natural Causes, or Agents, to produce without Supernatural

Assist.

Yet we  
find in  
Exodus  
instances  
of the Ma-  
gicians  
working  
the same  
miracles

as Moses did: and our Sav says  
that some might cast out devils, and

Assistance, and what is the least of those that are to be esteemed Supernatural Effects, and which ought to be ascribed to a cause of Transcendent Power, this is a matter of great difficulty. But yet when such things are done as were never heard of from the Foundation of the World, to be done by them that have made the greatest experiments of the strength and operation of Natural Causes; yea, which have directly crossed the course of Nature, without using any Natural Causes to oppose one another: I suppose that every rational man, will account him absurd that will deny these to be Miracles, and done by the immediate hand of God, except he can shew any Natural cause that should be imagined to work these effects.

This we find our *Saviour* to stand much upon, when he was on Earth, for the confirmation of his being the true *Messiah*. *I* <sup>Joh. 5.</sup> have a greater Witness, then that of John 36. (though the *Jews* did most of them reverence him greatly for his strict life) *the works which my Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.* And afterward, when the *Jews* asked Jesus, to tell them <sup>Joh. 10.</sup> plainly, whether he were the *Messiah*, he 25. sends them to his Works; *The works that I do in my Fathers Name, they bear witness of* Ver. 37, *me: And further saith, If I do not the* 38. *works of my Father, believe me not; but if do many mighty deeds, and I not be his Disciples.*

I do, though ye believe not me, yet believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. And elsewhere, Believe me that the Father is in me, and I in him, or else believe me for the very works sake. And again, If I had not done amongst them the works, which no other man can do, they had not had sin, (that is, their sin had not been so great and inexcusable) but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. Yea, he tells those that were understanding persons among them, that inasmuch as they had resisted and opposed that Doctrine which he had thus confirmed, and had imputed these works to the evil Spirit, therefore they had sinned that sin against the holy Ghost, which should never be forgiven. Thus you see that Jesus himself laid great stress upon this Argument, to prove himself to be the true Messiah, because he had done such works to confirm this Truth, as no other man could do, yea such as none but God himself could do.

Joh. 14.  
11.

Joh. 15.  
24.

Matt. 12.  
28.

Mark. 3.  
29.

Matt. 11.  
4.

And that Jesus did work these Miracles to confirm the truth of his being the Messiah, may be sufficiently evident, both by what hath been spoken already, and also by what he spake to the Disciples of John Baptist. When their Master sent them to him to be satisfied whether or no he were the true Messiah; he answers them, Go tell John the things that ye have seen and heard: The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are

are cleansed, the dead are raised up : And therefore do you judge who it is that hath power to do such works as these.

It would be a large task to reckon up all the Miracles of Christ which are upon record : I shall onely set before you some of those which do most apparently shew themselves to be works peculiar to the Divine Power to effect.

(a) He turned water into wine, at Cana of Galilee. (a) Joh. 2.

(b) He fed 5000 men with five loaves, (b) Mat. 14.

(c) and 4000 with seven loaves. (c) Mat. 15.

(d) He restored divers blind men to sight, amongst which one that was born blind. (d) Joh. 9. 1.

(e) He restored to speech and hearing, one that was deaf and dumb. He calmed the Seas twice. (e) Mar. 7. 32.

(f) Lazarus had been dead four days, so that there could be no doubt, but that he was really dead and past being recovered by natural Causes. (f) Joh. 11.

These works and many others which Jesus wrought, being such as no man can reasonably deny to be the works of Gods immediate power, and being wrought to confirm the truth of his being the true Messiah, may be sufficient to establish our Faith in the belief of it.

If the unbelieving Jews and Atheistical persons amongst us, do doubt of the truth of these matters of fact, and consequently of the truth that they are brought to confirm, alledging that we bring onely the Writings of the New Testament for the proof

proof thereof; which is of suspected credit with them :

*Answer.*

I answer that we have as much cause (Reason it self being judg) to believe the History of the New Testament, as any other *Histories* which are written in the world. If we believe the Roman History written by *Livie*, and *Suetonius*, & *Tacitus*; and the English Chronicles written by divers of our own Nation : and should account him very unreasonable that should deny the truth of the things therein reported, without alledging any sufficient ground for his suspecting the integrity of these Writers : then why should we not believe the matters of fact recorded by the Writers of the New Testament, seeing we cannot alledge any sufficient ground of doubting either the *sufficiency* of these Writers or yet their *integrity*? But have rather ground to conclude, that no *bad* creature would write those things, which tend so directly to the beating down of Satans Kingdom, and terrifying of lewd and wicked men : nor would any good creature so far take the name of God in vain, or wrong the souls of well-meaning people, as to report such matters in the name of God which they knew to be untruths : and that therefore it is most reasonable to conclude these things to be written by good men, and who did know themselves to write the truth.

Besides, the Miracles that Christ is reported

ported to have wrought were not done in a corner, nor a great while before they were written. He fed 5000 people at one time, and 4000 at another miraculously: yea, most of Christ Miracles were wrought openly, so that many of the Jews were present at the doing of them: and they were written in the same age wherein they were done: so that the unbelieving Jews, who were such enemies to Jesus, would certainly have contradicted them, if they had written an untruth.

Yea, other Writers besides the Evangelists do mention these Miracles. See what testimony Josephus himself, though a Jew, Joseph gives of Christ. At that time was Jesus a Antiq. wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man: l. 18. c. 4. for he was the performer of divers admirable works, and the instructor of those who willingly entertain the truth: and he drew unto him divers Jews and Greeks to be his followers. This was Christ, who being accused by the Princes of the Nation before Pilate, and afterward condemned to the Cross by him, yet did not they who followed him from the beginning forbear to love him, for the ignominy of his death: for he appeared to them alive the third day after, according as the divine Prophets had before testified the same. And divers other wonderful things of him: and from that time forward, the Race of Christians, who derived their name from him, hath never ceased.

*His pas. sage al. low'd on all hands to be a manifest in ter pole. tion.*

Thus we see Josephus confessech the great works

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See Du-

Pin. ecc. Hist.

works which he did, and withall the truth of his Doctrine, and certainty of his Resurrection: And, which we may greatly wonder at, he who in flattery had before called *Vespasian* the Messiah, when he comes to write this History (whether it overslipped him, or whether it was forced from him by the over-ruling hand of God) he confesseth that this Jesus was *the Christ*.

Yea, the *Turks* cannot but confess that Jesus did very many great and wonderful works: and therefore they preferr him before *Moses*, and set him next to their *Mahomet*, and say, He was a good man and a great Prophet. And some of the Jews say that Jesus was a very holy man, and highly in favour with God, who enabled him to do all these works: and yet they will not believe him to be the Messiah.

*This also is of God's full authority* *Pilate* himself who condemned him most unjustly to death, yet is said afterward to have written to *Tiberius*, a relation of his many Miracles. Whereupon *Tiberius* was willing to admit him into the number of their gods, and wrote to the *Senate* to that end. But the *Senate* refused, alledging one of their Laws, that none should be admitted into the number of their gods, but whom the *Senate* did first propose themselves. Which as it shews the *vanity* of minde, to which even the wiser sort of the Heathens were delivered up, that they could conceit that they could either keep out

out him who was truly God, by a Vote in the Senate, or by a more favourable Vote, when they were in a kinder mood, make him a God, who was none before: So it ~~shows~~ the *Providence* of God, in not permitting his own blessed Son, who as to his divine Nature, was equal to the Father, to be ranked amongst them that were no gods, as equal with them.

The *Evasion*, whereby some of the modern Jews, are said to endeavour to keep off this Argument from the Miracles which Jesus wrought, from convincing them that he was the true Messiah, is so absurd, that the very mentioning of it, will proclaim it ridiculous. They say, that as to those works which he did, he came to do them by this means: He got once into the *Holy of holies*, and stole out thence the name *Jehovah*, which was there written upon a Plate of Gold; and for fear lest it should be taken from him, he cut a hole in his Thigh, and put the Plate therein; and by vertue of that Name, they say he did all those miracles: Every man will easily see the absurdity of this, without my spending of words to confute it.

However, hereby it is evident, that men of all Nations and Professions, are convinced of the many miracles which Jesus wrought, when he was upon Earth: And forasmuch as he wrought these on purpose to confirm the truth of his being the Messiah that

was promised; we may therefore conclude that this Truth is hereby settled as such a Rock, that the gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against it.

2 Argu-  
ment.

The second Argument, shall be drawn from *Jesus his fulfilling all the Prophecies*, that went before, concerning the *Messiah*. All things did concur in his Person, which were foretold concerning the Person of the *Messiah*, and all things were done and suffered by him, that were foretold to be done and suffered by the *Messiah*, and therefore he was the true *Messiah*.

This was another great Argument which *Jesus himself* used; *Search the Scriptures*, *John 5.* *for they are those that testify of me.* And tells *39.* them, that if they did not shut their eyes, they might plainly see all things so exactly fulfilled in him, that, if they did not believe in him, *Moses himself would bear witness against them: For if they had believed Moses* *Verf. 45,* *writings, and rightly understood them, they* *46, 47.* *would have believed Jesus to be the Messiah.*

So when *Jesus*, after his Resurrection, was going with the two Disciples to *Emmaus*, he *Luk. 24.* *began at Moses, and so, through all the Prophets,* *25, 26,* *expounded unto them those things which were* *27.* *written concerning himself; and blames them for that they had searched and understood the writings of the Prophets no better. And the Apostle Paul at Thessalonica,* *Acts 17.* *entered into the Synagogue three Sabbath* *2, 3.* *days, And reasoned with them out of the*  
Scri-

Scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And again, it is said elsewhere, that St. Paul mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures, that Jesus is Christ. Acts 18. 28.

It is very observable, that the Evangelists in relating many of the passages of our Saviours life, do refer to the Prophecies that foretold these things. This, and This was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by this and the other Prophet, and then was fulfilled the saying of the Prophets, &c. So Jesus saith, These are the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Yea, he was so exact in accomplishing all the Prophecies, that when he was upon the Cross, in extremity of pain, and knew that all things were fulfilled, save only that one Prophecie, which foretold that they should give him Vinegar to drink, he therefore gives occasion for the fulfilling of it, before he would die; and when that was done, he said, It is finished, and then gave up the Ghost. Luk. 24. 44. John 19. 28. Ver. 30.

Now that we may be the more sensible how Jesus did fulfil all the Prophecies that went before, concerning the Messiah, let us consider it in these several Branches.

1. It was foretold, that the Messiah should

spring from the Loyns of Abraham, and in the Line of the House of David, Gen. 22. 18. and Chap. 49. 8. Isa. 11. 1. Now this was exactly fulfilled, as we see, Mat. 1. & Luk. 3. where the Pedegree is traced up to David, and thence to Judah, and so to Abraham: And for this very purpose, we may conceive these Genealogies to be set down, even to satisfy us, that Jesus came of these Families, as it had been foretold concerning him.

2. It was foretold, that he should be born of a Virgin; Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, &c. The Jews of late have endeavoured to evade the force of this Text, by corrupting it; telling us that the word *ym* which we render, a Virgin, doth onely signifie a Woman; but this, as it doth offer great violence to the word here used, so also to the scope of the Text, and Context. For the words are spoken as a signe to Abaz; Now what signe or wonder would it have been, to tell them that a Woman should conceive or bear a Son? But for a Virgin to conceive, and yet continue a Virgin still, that is a wonder, and fit to be given as a Signe. Now this also was fulfilled in that Jesus, in whom we believe as the Scripture shew. The Angel of God came to a Virgin, whose name was Mary, and told her, Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy Womb, &c. and when She asked, How can this be? seeing I know not a man. It was answered, The Holy

Mat. 1.  
18.

Luk. 1.  
34, 35.

*Holy Ghost shall come upon Thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow Thee, &c.*

3. The Messiah was to be born in *Bethlehem*. *Thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be mean amongst the Tribes of Israel, yet out of thee shall he come forth, who shall be Ruler of my people.* The Jews were sensible of this, and therefore the Scribes and Elders, directed the *Wise-men* thither, and cite this place of the Prophet for it. Now Jesus was born there; and it is the more observable, because of that Providence which brought *Joseph*, and the blessed Virgin thither, without any thoughts of him that called them thither.

Mat. 2.  
Luk. 2.

4. It was foretold, that the Messiah should have *John Baptist*, to go before him. *Behold, I will send my Messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee; and then, The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into his Temple.* And elsewhere, he is called the *Voice of one crying in the Wilderness*, *Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.* Now Jesus in whom we believe, had *John Baptist* to be born six months before him; and he is said to begin a little before Jesus began to Preach, and he Taught in the Wilderness of *Judea*, the Baptism of Repentance, for the Remission of sin. And it is observable how *St. Mark* begins his Gospel, as it were taking at these Prophecies of *Isaiah* and *Malachy*, *The beginning of the*

Mal. 3. 1.

Isa. 40. 3.

Luk. 1. 1

Mal. 3.

Mark 1.  
1, 2.

*Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the Propbets, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, &c.*

5. The Prophet foretold that when the Messiah should come, he should confirm his Doctrine by many and great Miracles. *Then*  
 Isa. 35. 5, *the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the*  
 6. *ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an Hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.* Now Jesus did confirm his Doctrine with these and many other Miracles, as I have shewed. But to apply his Miracles particularly to this Prophesie; He opened the eyes of *the blind*, Matt. 9. 27. he unstopped the ears of *the deaf*, Mar. 7. 32. he made the lame to *walk*, Matt. 15. 30. and the dumb to *speak*, Matt. 9. 32.

6. It was foretold that the Messiah should enter into *Jerusalem* in a kinde of a triumphant manner. That they should cry to him *Hosanna*, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* For the word *Hosanna*  
 Zech. 9. 9. signifies *Save we beseech thee*, and in the Original of that place of the Psalm, the word  
 Psal. 118. 25, 26. *Hosanna* is used. And this also was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as you may see at large, Mat. 21.

7. It was foretold that he should be betrayed by one of his own Servants. As *David* in his own person speaketh, *Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against*  
 Psal. 41. 9.

gainst me. And that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, with which thirty pieces Zech. 11. the potters field should be purchased. Now 13. this was exactly fulfilled in Jesus: for Judas one of the twelve went to the Chief-priests, and said, *What will ye give me, and* Mat. 26. *I will deliver him unto you ? and they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver:* with which, after Judas in remorse of conscience had restored it, they consulted together, and bought the Potters field to bury Mat. 27. strangers in. And whereas there may be 7, 8, 9. some scruple here, in that the Greek cites *Jeremy* the Prophet, when the words are not to be found in him, but in *Zechariah*: for the resolving of this, see *Junius in Parallelis*, *Doctor Hammon in loc.* and other Commentators.

8. It was foretold that the Messiah should suffer death, that he should pour out his soul Isa. 53. 12 unto death, that he should be numbred with vers. 5. transgressors: that he should be scourged, to the end, that by his stripes we might be Psal. 22. healed. That he should be crucified, I may 17. tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me: this crucifying was such a torment as did, as it were, put all his bones out of joynt. That he should be mocked by his enemies, as he hanged upon the Cross. That he should have vinegar mingled with gall given him vers. 7. 8. to drink. That they should divide his Gar- Psa. 69. ments among them, and cast lots upon his 21. Vesture. Now these things were all fulfilled Psal. 22. in 19.

in Jesus Christ: as we may see if we consult the story of his death in the Evangelists, and in particular, Mat. 27. 15, 26, 34, 35, 38, 39.

9. It was foretold that the Messiah should rise again from the dead the third day. That when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should see his seed and prolong his days. And some take those words in Hosea, Hos. 6. 4. to foretel his rising the third day, After two days he will revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight. That he should ascend Heaven, Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; and received gifts for men. And some take that other place to be a prophesie of the same, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Now this also was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who rose again from the dead the third day: and ascended into heaven before divers witnesses.

Lastly, it was foretold that the Messiah should be God as well as Man, as I have shewed fully before, by those Names that are given to him. Now Jesus in whom we believe, as he was evident to all that knew him, to be truly man; so is he affirmed to be over all God blessed for ever: to be Davids Son, and Davids Lord also.

There were also some other things foretold concerning the Messiah. As that he should call the Gentiles, enter into the second

cond Temple, ruine the Idols of the Heathen, silence their Oracles, &c. But of these I have spoken in the last Chapter. Also there are some lesser matters as that he should be called a *Nazarite*, that he should be brought up and preach in *Galilee*, and the like. But these things which I have mentioned, are some of the chief things that are contained in the Prophecies concerning the Messiah.

To sum up therefore the Argument: If all things that were foretold concerning the person of the Messiah, or concerning what he should do and suffer upon earth, did concur in that *Jesus* in whom we believe, then may we conclude him to be the true Messiah: But all things did concur in his person as to his Conception, Birth, &c. and all things were done and suffered by him, which the Prophets foretold concerning the Messiah: Therefore we may undoubtedly believe, that the same *Jesus* in whom we believe is the true Messiah, who was promised to come into the world.



## C H A P. IX.

*The fourth Proposition confirmed, viz.  
That the Apostles and Evangelists  
of the New Testament do hold forth  
unto us such a Christ as was really,  
and in a proper sense God and  
Man hypostatically united in one  
Person : And who did in a real and  
proper sense satisfie Gods justice for  
our sins, and purchase eternal Sal-  
vation for us by his Merits.*

**W**E have proceeded so far, as to shew  
evident proof of these truths : that  
the Son of God was promised to the fathers  
of the Old Testament, to take our Nature  
upon him, and to become our Saviour : and  
that the time for the fulfilling of these Pro-  
mises, yea, the set time is long since come :  
and withal that the same Jesus in whom we  
believe, is that very Messiah who was pro-  
mised to the fathers. And me-thinks to  
men of moderately clear Reason, and com-  
petent Modesty, this might be sufficient  
both to satisfie all doubts, and also to  
stop their mouths from cavilling at,  
or

or contradicting our Christian Faith.

But because, first, there are a generation of people, *so wise in their own eyes*, that they conceit themselves to see something more in the name of *Christ*, then the Churches of God in all ages have seen. And secondly, do talk of a perfection of righteousness by walking up to the dictates of I know not what *light within*. And thirdly, do seek for the confirmation of all points of Faith out of the New Testament, as if the Old Testament were *too old to be good*. I shall therefore, for the convincing of these men (if possible) or (at least) for the stopping of their mouths: and withal for the strengthening of our Faith against the cavils of seducers without, and the suggestions of Satan within, endeavour from the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists to prove; First, that Christ was really such as we believe him to be, and such as the Prophets foretold him to be, *The Son of God made Man, or The Word made Flesh*. Secondly, that he did fully, and in a true and proper sense make satisfaction to Gods justice for our sins, and that there is no way to be saved, but by his Merits.

First, That Christ was such as we believe him to be, and such as the Prophets did foretel that he should be, *viz. God and Man, or the Word made flesh*. By the mouth of two or three witnesses, (saith God in the Law) shall every word be established. And it is our comfort

Deut. 17.  
6.

fort, that God hath given us, not onely two  
 Heb. 2. or three witnesses, but even a whole *cloud* of  
 1. witnesses, to establish this Word of Faith.  
 Christ chose twelve Apostles to be witnesses  
 of what he did and spake upon earth; and be-  
 sides them there are many other witnesses of  
 this Truth.

First, the *Angels* whose Ministry God was  
 pleased to use in the revealing of this great  
 Mytery to the World. Before he was con-  
 ceived in the Womb, the Angel, speaking  
 to *Zacharias*, calls him *The Lord* as to his  
 Luke 1. Divine Nature, and speaks of his *coming af-*  
 17. *ter John Baptist*, as to his humane Nature.  
 v. 30. 31. And speaking to the *B. Virgin*, he tells her  
 that she should *conceive in her Womb and bear*  
*a Son*: This notes his humane Nature. And  
 he shall be called *The Son of the Highest*; and  
 the Lord God shall give him the *Throne of his*  
*father David*: This notes the truth of his  
 Divinity. And when he was conceived in  
 the Womb, an Angel tells *Joseph*, that *That*  
 Mar. 1. *which was conceived in the Blessed Virgin, was*  
 20 21. *of the holy Ghost*, and that she should call his  
 Name *Jesus*, because he should *save his people*  
*from their sins*. Behold both his Humanity  
 in his Conception, and his Divinity in his  
 Office, to save his people. And again,  
 when he was born, the Angel saith to the  
 Luk. 2. Shepherds, *To you is born a Saviour which is*  
 10, 11. *Christ the Lord*: he is born, this notes his  
 Humanity: he is *Christ the Lord*, that notes  
 his Divinity. Again, after his Resurrection,  
 an

an Angel saith unto the Women, that Christ who was crucified was *risen up again*; *Mat. 28.* That shews that he was truly man. *Come 5, 6.* *see the place where the Lord lay:* That shews *Act. 1. 11* him to be truly God. Yea, after he was ascended into Heaven, they say of him: *This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven:* his Ascension which was a change of Place, notes his Humanity: his coming to Judge the world, his Divine Power and Authority. So that all along the Angels witness him to be truly God and truly Man.

2. We have the testimony of many Pious Persons in the New Testament: which, though to a Jew or Heathen it be of little value, yet to all that profess obedience to the holy Scriptures, it is of great moment. Let us see the confession of *Zachary: Luk. 1.* He calls him *the Lord God of Israel who had 68.* *visited his people* so as to Redeem them: a clear testimony of both his Natures. And *vers. 43.* *Elizabeth calleth the Blessed Virgin, The 47.* *mother of her Lord.* And the Blessed Virgin her self calls him that was conceived in her Womb, *The Lord her Saviour:* a clear proof of his two Natures.

3. *John Baptist* gives testimony to this: whose testimony may well be reckoned distinctly from other Saints, because he was sent especially about this Message, to bear witness of Christ. He calls him *The Lamb* *Joh. 1.* *of 29.*

of God, that taketh away the sins of the world: Here he gives Testimony both to his Divinity, in that he was able to make satisfaction to Gods justice, and to take away sin; and to his Humanity, in that he was a Lamb that had a body to sacrifice; and to the end of his coming into the world, viz. to take away the sins thereof.

4. The greatest and most Authentick Testimony that can be desired or imagined, is that of the Father from Heaven concerning him: *Mat. 3. 17. Chap. 17. 5. This is my well beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* That he was truly man, was evident to those that were about him; that he was God, was evident by the Testimony of God himself, who is the God of Truth.

5. The passages of his life upon Earth, do shew him to be both truly God and truly Man. His *hungering and thirsting*, his *weariness and faintness*, his *sighing and weeping*, and such other fruits of humane infirmity, were sufficient Arguments to prove him to be *truly man*. And all the *miraculous works* of his Power, which he wrought upon earth (of which I have spoken before) as they shew him to be the Messiah, that was foretold by the Prophets; of whom it was foretold that he should work such miracles; so also that he was *truly God*, as himself argues.

*Isa. 35. 5, 6.*

*Joh. 5. 36*

6. The Testimony of the Evangelists and Apostles, doth confirm this: Of *St. Peter*, *Mat. 16. 16. Acts 2. 36. Chap. 3. 17, 18. and*

and Chap. 4. 11, 12, and Chap. 10. 43.  
 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20. Of St. Paul, Acts 9. 22.  
 and Chap. 13. 23, 34. Rom. 15. 8. 2 Cor. 1.  
 10. 2 Tim. 2. 8. Of St John, 1 John 2. 22.  
 and Chap. 5. 2, 15. Of St. Stephen, the  
 Proto-martyr, Acts 7. 52. Of St. Philip,  
 Acts 8. 32. And many more Instances of this  
 sort might be alledged, but these are some  
 of the chief.

7. The general consent of the Catholick  
 Church of Christ in all Ages, ever since the  
 time of Jesus and his Apostles, who have  
 held this Truth, and made it a main Article  
 of all their Creeds: The concurrence of all  
 Pious and Orthodox *Fathers and Councils*,  
 beside the chearful and undaunted suffer-  
 ings of many thousands of *Martyrs*, for the  
 Profession of this Faith: This, I say, to-  
 gether with the former Testimonies, do argue  
 this foundation of our Faith, to be laid as  
 so sure a Rock, that *The gates of Hell, shall* Mat. 16.  
*never be able to prevail against it:* and that we 18.  
 may comfortably venture our selves upon  
 this Truth, that the same Jesus in whom  
 we believe, is both *Lord and Christ, God*  
*and Man, Hypoatically united.*

Secondly, Let us proceed to the other  
 Head, viz. to prove that, Christ did fully,  
 and in a true and proper sense, make satis-  
 faction to Gods justice for our sins: And  
 that, Salvation is to be expected from, him  
 and no other way.

1. It is very evident that the Apostles, in  
 the

Rom. 5.

10.

Ver. 19.

the New Testament, do affirm us to be reconciled to God, and justified in his sight, by the merits and sufferings of Christ: *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* Which as it shews plainly, that there was an enmity between God and man through the Fall, and this enmity mutual: God offended by mens transgression, and man alienated from God, by the depravation of his Nature; So it shews whereby the Reconciliation was wrought between God and man, even by the death of Christ the Son of God; who did both by the merits of his death, satisfie Gods justice; and also by the efficacy of his Death, and Resurrection, take from us the stony heart, and give us an heart of flesh. And it is very observable, how afterward the Apostle makes a direct *Antithesis*, between the first and the second Adam: the misery that beset us by the transgression of the first, and the benefits we receive by the obedience and sufferings of the latter: *As by one mans disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.* Which words as they do suppose, the Communication of the guilt of Adams sin to all his posterity, whereby they are said to be made sinners, and liable to Gods justice: So they do plainly express the benefits of Christs death, to be communicated to the justification of as many as do believe in him. And what can be a plainer proof of the point in hand?

Second-

Secondly, The New Testament speaks of the blood of Christ, being shed to make an attonement for us. *Being found in fashion of Phil. 2.8. a man,* having taken our Nature upon him and set himself in our stead, in this nature and in our stead, *He humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.* And, that we may know that he died for us, & shed his blood to make attonement to Divine Justice for our sins; St. John tells <sup>1 Joh. 1.</sup> us, *That the blood of Jesus Christ his Son,* <sup>7.</sup> *cleanseth us from all our sins;* And St. Peter <sup>1 Pet. 2.</sup> tells us, *That by his stripes, we are healed:* <sup>24.</sup> Not healed only in a moral sense, as good examples tend to heal and take away corrupt manners: as if Christ had come into the world, onely to give us an example of Holiness in his life, and of Humility and Patience at his death, and that were all the benefit which we were to expect by him: But we are so healed by his stripes, that our sins are thereby pardoned, being punished on his back: He suffered, *the just for the unjust,* to the end that he might justify the ungodly that believe in him: So himself tells us, <sup>Luk. 22.</sup> *that his blood was shed for many, for the remis-* <sup>20.</sup> *sion of sins.* He died that he might purchase at Gods hands; the pardon of our sins, by undergoing that punishment which we had deserved. To this agrees that Character which the Baptist gives of Christ: *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin* <sup>Joh. 1. 29</sup> *of the world.* This sheweth plainly that he

was slain, and offered up as a Propitiatory sacrifice, to expiate the guilt of our sins.

3. The New Testament sets him forth as the *Substance* of all the Legal purifications, and ceremonial Oblations, and Expiations which were used by the Law of *Moses*: And this argues, that he made an Attonement for us. Certainly the great God of Heaven and Earth, did not take their Cattel from the Jews, because he had need of them, or because he delighted in shedding the blood of innocent Beasts, that were no wayes accessory to the sins of their Masters: But we have reason to believe, there were further matters intended by these Ceremonies of the Law. God did appoint these Ceremonial washings, and expiations, after legal defilements, that the people might be put in mind of the *defiling* nature of sin, and might be warned to take heed of it, as that which defiles the soul, and accordingly might endeavour, after they had fallen into it, to wash their souls with tears of Repentance and Contrition. He charged their Estates, and caused them to sacrifice their Cattel, that they might learn, that Sin is very *displeasing* to God, and did expose them to that, and a worse death then the innocent beast did sustain: And yet further, to put them in mind, that *without shedding of blood*, the blood of Christ the Lamb of God, *there could be no remission of sin obtained*: And that their laying their *hand* upon the sacrifice that

that was offered up for them, might stir them up to put forth an hand of Faith, to lay hold upon Jesus Christ: And by washing their bodies in water, they might be put in mind, to apply themselves to that Fountain set open for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in, for sin and for uncleanness. Zech. 13. 1.

That this was the signification of their ceremonial Cleansings, and Expiations, and that Christ by the shedding of his blood, did accomplish that for us really and effectually, which was shadowed in these Ceremonies, is very evident in that of the Apostle: *Not by the blood of Calves or Goats, (as the high Priest amongst the Jews, was wont to enter into the most holy Place) but by his own blood he entered once into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us.* Hence he sheweth the excellency of Christ's sacrifice, beyond those Typical sacrifices: Those Priests offered often, He offered but once; they entered into the holy Place made with hands, He into the holy Place made without hands, even into Heaven; whither he went as our Head, to prepare a place for us, and to shew that he had purchased eternal Redemption for us, and an interest in that Inheritance, which he went to take possession of for us. And he goes on to argue, *a fortiori*, Ver. 13. *If the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the ashes of an Heifer sprinkling the unclean, did sanctifie to the purifying of the flesh, in a legal sense; Ver. 14. then how much more shall the blood of Christ,*

&c? Seeing the Sacrifice which Christ offered was of infinit value, as being offered up by the Eternal Spirit, or Divine Nature, which was Hypostatically united to the humane Nature; it is therefore sufficient to make a full and perfect Attonement for us.

Verf. 15. And further, *For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the Redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, &c.* Which shews very evidently, that Christ was the thing intended by those ceremonial Oblations; that his blood did that in a real and effectual manner, which those sacrifices did Legally and Typically; and withal that his death was intended purposely for the Redemption of Transgressions.

Gal. 3. 13. 4. It is said, that, *Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.* He was subject to that accursed death, and to the wrath of God for the present; for this end, that he might deliver us from this wrath and curse of God, and from that eternal death, which our sins had made us liable unto. There was no reason for Christs suffering as to any thing in himself: For, *He had done no evil, neither was any guile found in his mouth;* but he bare our  
 I Pet. 1. 22. *sins in his body upon that Tree,* whereon he suffered that shameful, painful, and accursed death.

5. The Apostles do plainly pronounce that we are redeemed by the death of Christ.

The

The Apostle Paul saith, *We are justified freely* Rom. 3.  
*by his Grace, through the Redemption of Je-* 24, 25.  
*sus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be*  
*ἱλαστήριον, a propitiation through Faith in his*  
*blood: Here the Apostle doth exprelly say,*  
*that Christ is a Redeemer, and a Propitiation*  
*for us, and shews us that the onely way to*  
*have our sins pardoned, is by Faith in his*  
*blood. So the Apostle Peter saith, We are* 2 Pet. 1.  
*redeemed, not with corruptible things, as Sil-* 18, 19.  
*ver and Gold, but with the most precious blood*  
*of Christ, that Lamb without spot and blemish.*  
*To which agrees that of St. Paul, He is* 1 Cor. 1.  
*made of God to us, Wisdom, Righteousness,* 30.  
*Sanctification, and Redemption: And again,* 1 Cor. 6.  
*We are bought with a price: And St. Peter* 20.  
*calls Christ, The Lord that bought us. So* 2 Pet. 2. 1.  
*elsewhere it is said, There is one God, and one* 1 Tim. 2.  
*Mediatour between God and man, the man* 5, 6.  
*Christ Jesus, who gave himself ἀντὶ ἡμῶν, a*  
*ransom for us: To this agrees that, In whom* Col. 1. 14.  
*we have redemption through his blood, even the*  
*remission of sins: And further, The Hand-* chap. 2.  
*writing that was against us, is said to be nailed* 14.  
*to his Cross.*

6. St. Paul tells us, That Jesus Christ hath purchased that *Righteousness* for us, which we could not obtain by the works of the Law; that is, by our own personal Obedience to the Law of God. If man had from his first Creation continued in perfect obedience to the Law of his Creator, there would have been no need of Christs dying:

But man had sinned and come short of this Obedience, and therefore Christ died, to expiate this guilt which we had contracted by our disobedience: *If righteousness come by the Law, saith the Apostle, then Christ died in vain*; There would have been no need of Christs death, if man could have been righteous by his own good works; but Christ therefore died, because we were condemned before God, and he took our guilt upon him: And, *By him all that believe are justified from all those things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses; God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, subject to the obedience and to the curse of the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law.*

7. The Apostles tell us, That whatsoever Christ did or suffered, it was for our sakes, and to purchase Reconciliation and Salvation for us. *He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; and our sins are said to be forgiven us, for his Names sake.* In which respect Christ calls *his flesh our meat, and his blood our drink, because, as our bodies are kept alive by Bread, so are our souls by his Merits: As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by him, so he that eateth me, that is, applies me to his soul by Faith, he shall live by me.*

By these and many other Testimonies of the Evangelists, and Apostles of Jesus Christ, it is sufficiently evident to every man whose eyes

eyes are not blinded by the *God of this world*, that Christ did offer up himself an *Expiatory* sacrifice for our sins; and that through his Merits, and Sufferings alone it is, that we obtain the forgiveness of our sins, and eternal Salvation,



CHAP. X.

*From the foregoing Discourses, two Cautions are deduced. First, That we take heed of laying any other Foundation, then that which is laid, viz. Jesus Christ: Three sorts of Persons that build beside this Foundation. Secondly, That we take heed what we build upon this Foundation.*

**W**E have seen the Doctrine of *Christ crucified*, as the onely way to Justification and Salvation, laid open and asserted in the four preceding Propositions: And from what hath been spoken, we may,

First conclude with the Apostle, that, *1 Cor. 3. Other Foundation can no man lay, then that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, and his merits. This is a foundation of Gods own lay-*

1 Pet. 2. laying, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone,  
 6. elect and pretious, he that believeth in him shall not be confounded: And whosoever attempts to lay any other foundation, or to draw men off from this Foundation, must needs expect to be confounded in the issue. Three sorts of builders we meet with, even amongst those that pretend to Christianity, who attempt to lay other foundations, or at least are in danger to draw men off from this sure Foundation.

1. The *Papists*, who though they have devised many Ceremonies and complementary expressions of honour unto Christ in their way of Worship, yet are found to betray him in their Doctrine, while they salute him with so many *Ave's*. There are two Points of Popery, which are detestable to every true Christian, as having an apparent tendency to draw men off from that honour which they owe to Christs Merits, and that trust which they ought to repose in Him alone.

First, The *adoration and invocation of Saints departed*. To omit their Canonizing of those for Saints, that either had never any other place but in the Popish Calendars; their Utopian Saints, as *Christopher*, and *George*, and such like: as also those who though they have lived upon earth, yet it may justly be suspected they never lived in Heaven; their prophane and traitorous Saints, their *Becket*, and *Faux*, &c. And yet

yet this tends much to render their Religion ridiculous, that they should undertake to make them Saints that were either no men or no honest men; and expect help from those that stand in need of help themselves, though it shall never be afforded them. To omit this, I say that the Divine Worship, which they bestow upon the best and most undoubted Saints, the *Apostles* or *Evangelists*; yea, or the *Blessed Virgin* herself, is no better than gross Idolatry. We reverence the *Mother of our Saviour*, inasmuch as *He that is Mighty hath magnified her*, and therefore *we and all generations do deservedly call her Blessed*. We honour the memory of the *Apostles* and *Martyrs* in Heaven, and those dayes which our Church appoints annually for keeping up the remembrance of them, do put us in minde to bless God for his Graces bestowed on them, and the benefits which we may hope to receive both by their Doctrine and Examples. But to give Divine Honour to any of these, so as to worship them or invoke their help, either as absolute donors, or yet as intercessours; we believe to be as palpable idolatry, as to worship any of the Heathen gods. And certainly if the *Blessed Virgin*, and the other *Saints* in Heaven were capable of understanding the superstitious vanity of those that worship them, and of communicating their mindes to us on earth, they would declare their utmost abhorrency and detestation of that undue

Luke 1. 48, 49.

due

## The Doctrine of

due honour which is given them. Beside, is it not gross *Sottishness* for men to believe that their whispers should be heard by the Saints in Heaven, and the whispers of so many thousands as may be conceived to be praying to one Saint at the same time; except they can either shew some reason that perswades them to this belief, or else a promise that such prayers should be heard? And what can be more evident then the *wrong* that is done to Jesus Christ, by substituting many mediators of Intercession, as if himself were either not *able* or not at *leisure* to receive all the petitions that are put up to him at the same time, or else had not so much *goodness* and compassion in him towards his people, as the Saints have, which should make us to expect a speedier redress, by calling upon them then by calling upon himself? The Apostle tells

1 Tim. 2. 5. us, that *There is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* And as the owning or worshipping of more gods then one, is as absurd and impious as to worship none at all; so the owning or invoking more then one Mediator, is an high wrong to *Jesus Christ our onely Mediator and Advocate.*

2. Their Doctrine of *Merits* doth lay another foundation beside Jesus Christ. When they teach a Merit either of *condignity*, or yet of *congruity* in our good Works; yes, are so super-arrogant as to teach their

Doctrine

Doctrine of *supererogation* : A monstrous term, invented to express a monstrous Notion in Divinity : and that which doth apparently tend to draw men off from building their Faith wholly upon the foundation of Christs Merits, and to part the glory of their Salvation between him and the Saints departed. Doubtless, this is such a gross and apparent contradiction to the Doctrine of the Gospel, that themselves could not but be sensible of it, did not that gain which accrues to them by dispensing these merits from the Popes treasury, blind their eyes that they cannot see a truth which would be so unprofitable to them to own.

Rom. 11.

6.

Eph. 2. 9.

2 Tim. 1.

9.

Tit. 3. 5.

Secondly, some *new Projectors* amongst us, who if they did terminate their speculations within the compass of Philosophical points, we would easily allow them to make themselves proud with conceiving that they have found out a device to see further into a Millstone than their poor blind Forefathers. But when they will attempt to alter the old Bodies of Divinity, under pretence of solving I know not what *Phænomena* in the Divine providence ; they must give us leave to look a little into their proceedings in matters wherein our Free-hold is so nearly concerned.

How happy did the *Protoplasts* conceive themselves, when they thought of being like God to know both good and evil ? and how great happiness do many conceive in

at-

attempting such a scrutiny into every thing, that not only Nature, but Religion also must discover all its secrets to their refined reason? When these persons have first performed such wonders in *Nature*, as to grasp all the Air that incircles the Earth in their fist, or to embrace Heaven in their arms, or to lade the Ocean dry with a Nut-shell; then we shall believe that the vastness of their Reason may not only comprehend those matters of *Faith*, which we poor Mortals have admired for so many ages; but also perfect their devices for climbing up to the *Lunar Orbe*, and examine the Religion that is professed there. But they might do well, first to discover the *contradictions* that are to be met with, in the old Systems of Divinity, and that by men that have so much *seriousness* and *humility*, as to understand them in a competent and candid manner: and next to *reconcile* the contradictions which are so palpable in some of their *Hypotheses*, (by name that which supposeth the *Eternity of the World*) and then to begin to apply their Engines to work strange feats, when they have found them fit to bear the censure of the world. These attempts, if they have not disposed the *Authors* of them, yet I fear they will prepare many of the *Readers* and admirers of them, to be first *Scepticks* then *Hereticks*, and in conclusion *Atheists*. Thirdly, another sort are they who (to give

give them a Name nearest relating to their principal Tenet, or rather pretence) may be termed *Illuminati*. Those that pretend to such a *light within*, as should be sufficient to lead them to Heaven, if they walk answerably to it. I would willingly know of these pretenders, what they understand this *light* to be? Is it *Christ*, or is it something else? If they say, It is *Christ*, whom we have shewed to be God and Man hypostatically united; then how near do they symbolize with the *Papists* in their Doctrine of the *Ubiquity* of *Christ*, and their Capernaïtical conceit of a gross eating of *Christs* Body by the most wicked man, that partakes of the Elements in the *Eucharist*? Seeing this Tenet would both suppose *Christs* Person to be every where, and also to have his abode in the vilest of men, as well as in the best. But if they say, It is something else than *Christ*, I ask then, What it is? Is it that Spirit which *Christ* before he left the world, promised to send? Or is it onely the Natural light of Reason and Conscience, which are the remainders of that Law of God, which was written upon Mans heart in his Creation, but sadly defaced by the Fall? If they say that it is that Spirit which *Christ* promised to send after his Ascension: We must desire them to take notice, that in this Promise there was something peculiar to the Apostles and others that were to be sent abroad to preach the Gospel in the beginning

- ning of the planting of Christianity : some things that have respect to all Believers in all succeeding ages of the Church : and others, that were common to all the World. It was peculiarly promised and fulfilled to the *Apostles*, and some others that were to be employed in planting the Gospel at first, to have the Holy Ghost given them to enable them to work *Miracles*, and to speak with divers *tongues* for the confirmation of the Doctrine which they taught : and this, I suppose, they cannot themselves believe to be in every man that comes into the World, nor yet in every man that talks of God and pretends to *this light* : If they do, let them shew it by working of *Miracles*, and speaking with strange *Tongues*. It was promised to *all Believers* that this Holy Spirit should be a *Comforter* to them, and withal a *Remembrancer*, to teach them, & bring to their memories the things which Christ had spoken : but in this sense also, they cannot but
- Ad. 1. 8. confess that the Spirit of God is onely given to the *children of God*. It was more generally promised that this Spirit of God in the Ministry of the *Apostles* and their *Successors*, who should be fitted for and assisted in their Ministry by this Spirit, should convince the world of *sin, of righteousness, and of judgement* : but what is this to such an inward teaching as they conceive to be in every man from this *light within* ? But then if they say, It is the *Light of reason and natural conscience*
- Joh. 14. 26.
- Gal. 4. 6.
- Joh. 16. 8

conscience, as we confess this to be in every man, and that even the worst of men, the Heathens themselves, have that within them which doth testify against their grossly lewd and vicious courses, and accuse and condemn them when they have done such things; and withall doth excuse and encourage them when they have done that which is good: so we must needs add, that this light is far from being sufficient to lead men to Heaven. I have shewed before, how far the *light of nature* will guide us, and how far it will leave us short of Heaven, if it be not helped by a better light. And I may here say further, that this light of Nature is so far vitiated by the Fall, that the Scripture doth frequently represent the state of a man in his natural condition, to be an *estate of darkness*, and the regeneration of a soul to be a *turning it from darkness to light*. If then the light that is in man be darkness, how should it be sufficient to lead him to Heaven without a better guide?

But how do they mean that this light within is sufficient to lead a man to Heaven? Is it so sufficient, that there is no need of *Laws or Government* to punish evil doers, and to encourage them that do well? Is it so sufficient, that we have no need of the *preaching* of the Word of God, or to hearken to the dictates of that light without? Is it so sufficient, that a man by walking up to

it may attain Heaven by a righteousness of his own, so as not to stand in need of the help of a crucified Jesus, either for the pardon of actual sin, and much less of original, which persons of these Principles do seem to disown? This we have sad reason to suspect to be the tendency of this dark Tenet concerning a *light within*, and that which the Authors and divulggers of this Opinion do aim at: for otherwise they bring to light nothing extraordinary in it, and therefore spend a great deal of pains and ill-composed Zeal in opposing those who taught them this very thing, that *Christ is the true Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world*: that he is that *Sun of Righteousness that is arisen upon the earth with healing in his wings*: that there is sufficient light in him to enlighten the darkness of our souls: that what light soever is in any man, whether that of *Nature* or the other of *Grace*, it comes from him: and moreover that there is in every man that cometh into the world the *light of nature*, and the remainders of that Law which was written upon mans heart at first, not quite obliterated by the Fall. These things, I say, we taught them, and wherefore do they set up this as the principle wherein they differ from us and oppose us, if they mean no more than this in the plain and true sense of it? But it is too sadly evident that those that are the deceivers of them have a further meaning, even

ven a denying of a crucified Christ, and setting up a righteousness of their own, though the poor deceived ones that follow the glorious blaze of this *new light*, or rather *Ignis fatuus*, do not understand these depths of Satan, and I wish they never may understand them so as to own them. *Woe to him that stumbles at this stone. Who is a* 1 Joh. 2.  
*lyar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the* 22.  
*Christ: he is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.*

Secondly, as we should all take heed that we keep close to this one Foundation, so also we should have a care *what we build* 1 Cor. 3.  
*upon this foundation.* The Apostle tells us, 12, 13.  
that there are some who build upon it *Gold, Silver, and precious Stones*, sound and Orthodox principles of Faith; and these shall receive a reward when their works come to be tried and approved. But others build *Wood, Hay, Stubble*, gross and unsound conclusions; and these, though they shall be saved in the day of Christ, so long as they hold fast the Foundation, yet when their works come to be tried in the fire, *they shall suffer loss, but themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire.* It is good when men hold fast the Foundation: though they err in less matters, the Lord will take occasion in his good time to convince them, and bring them to Heaven at last: but it is better not onely to lay a good Foundation, but also to build a good superstructure upon it.

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There are two sorts of bad *superstitions* which many build even upon the Foundation of Christ crucified.

1. There are some who encourage themselves in *looseness* and *licentiousness* in their practice, from the consideration of the *Grace of God in Christ*. It is very certain that the *Mercy of God* and the *Merits of Christ*, are not one'y very great, but infinitely beyond all that we can speak or think of them. But yet the *mercy* and the *truth of God* are joyned together: And as he hath said that *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall finde mercy*; and he will be sure to make this good: there was never any that came to him *weary and heavy laden*, but he did give him *rest*: So on the other hand, he hath threatened to *wound the head of his enemies*, and the *hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses*: and therefore those that make this bad use of the free and gracious promises of the Gospel, and those instances that the Scriptures shew us of the wonderful mercy of God to sinners, do both wrong and deceive their own souls, and also they injure the great Mercy of God in Christ while they seem to advance it. His name was called *Jesus*, because he should *save his people from their sins*, not in them. And himself bore our sins in his own Body upon the Cross, to the end that we being dead unto sin, might *live unto righteousness*, and then we may comfortably hope that by his stripes we are healed

Psal. 25.  
10.

Prov. 28.  
13.

Mat. 11.  
28.

Psal. 68.  
21.

Mat. 1.  
21.

1 Pet. 2.  
24.

*bealed.* This then is one sort of them that build *Hay and stubble* upon this pretious Foundation ; and though God may in Mercy save such persons, yet it will be *as by fire* ; such must expect to be brought unto great humiliation and brokenness of heart, before they finde assurance of Gods Mercy.

2. There are others, who though they hold fast the Foundation of the Christian Faith, yet build upon it many *erronious conclusions*, in matters further off from the Foundation. Indeed it is the Duty of every Christian to bear with many infirmities and mistakes in his brother, whom he findes to be sound in the main, as considering himself also to be a man. But no man ought to indulge himself in an error; both because error persisted in with eagerness and obstinacy, is to be accounted rather a sin of *presumption* than infirmity, and withall because of the dangerous tendency of errors, of which I spake before. Such a Chap. 3.  
person who is sound in fundamentals, doubtless God will not charge upon him to his condemnation mistakes in smaller matters; but yet his *works shall suffer loss, and himself shall be saved as by fire*; he must expect to pass through convictions and contrition of heart before he come to Heaven And therefore as every good Christian should make it his first care to hold fast the Foundation of our Faith, so he should not neglect due care of his superstructures, that he  
K 3      build

build nothing upon this pretious Foundation, that may be unsuitable or dishonourable to the foundation upon which it is built.



## CH A P. XI.

*A Seasonable and necessary Admonition to those that stand fast in the Faith, delivered in five Branches.*

**B**Efore I withdraw my hand from this Undertaking, I think it very necessary to leave a word of *Admonition* with them that yet stand fast in the Faith, amidst all those blustering winds of strange doctrines which have tried mans stability. Indeed  
 Psal. 116. as David said in his haste, *That all men were lyars*; so if a man did with haste and passion take a view of the times wherein we live, he would be apt to take up the complaint  
 Mic. 7. 2. of the Prophet, *The good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men*: that there are scarce any left, who are not less or more shaken at the root. But yet as God answered *Elijah* in his complaint, *I have left me seven thousand in Israel,*  
 1 King. 19. 18. *all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every*

*every mouth which hath not kissed him* : So we have some grounds to hope that the Lord hath left many thousands in *England*, who are both upright in heart, and in a good measure sound in Judgment, notwithstanding all the Temptations which they have met with. To such therefore, I will direct my speech. And

I. Let me beseech and exhort all such as profess the true Ancient and Orthodox Faith, by that love they bear to the Truth, and to the God of Truth, by that reverence they owe to the Church, in which they were born, and to that Faith into which they have been Baptized, that they endeavour to *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour* Tit. 2, 10. *in all things*, and to cut off all just occasion from the mouths of slanderous persons, who are ready to object against those that profess the wayes of Truth, the evil and unanswerable lives of many that are retainers to this Profession.

I know that this is an *insufficient* ground for *Separation*, and will be far from justifying them before Gods Tribunal, for those rents which they have made in the seamless *Coat of Christ*. He that will separate from every Society, where there is any thing of sin amongst any of them that retain to it, had need to make haste out of this world, for he will find no society here to answer his expectation. And would not he have well deserved to be drowned, that would have

leaped out of *Noahs Ark* (which was a Type of the Visible Church) because of the evil society of a wicked *Cham*? Would not he have run upon a dangerous Rock, that would have forsaken the society of Christ, and his Apostles, because there was a *Judas* among them? He that can either shew me a *Command* to separate from every Church, where there is any corruption; or produce me any Church of God since Christs time, which hath not had some spots in it; or else convince me that the society with which himself is joyned, is free from sin: I will readily excuse him in his Separation. But in the mean time, forasmuch as I know that none of these can possibly be made out, I must needs, with the Apostle, pronounce *Schisms* to be of the works of the flesh, and this plea to be insufficient for the justifying of these practises,

1 Cor. 3.  
1.3.

Mat. 18. 7. But yet, as our Saviour saith, as It is impossible but that offences should come, so Woe to him by whom they do come. If men take occasion of scandal where it is not given, it is their fault; but he that gives just occasion of turning men away from the profession of the true Faith, and adherence to the true Church, by his lewd and wicked life; woe be to him, and, Better had it been for him, that he had never been born. It must needs be confessed, that the mouths of erroneous persons, are opened through the evil lives of many Church-lovers, and Church-men too, so

So that we may say, *Pudet hac opprobria nobis. Et dici potuisse & non potuisse refelli.* These things being told in Gath, and published in Ashdod, have caused the Daughters of the Uncircumcised to rejoyce. Let us therefore every one of us, set our selves both to cut off this occasion, and also to cause our Light so to shine before men, as may induce them all to embrace the Truth and Unity.

Certainly, what the Apostle speaks of Circumcision to the Jews, may be said of Baptism to the Christians. *It profiteth us greatly if we keep the Law, if we lead lives answerable to our Baptismal vow and Covenant: but if not, it will be all one as if we had not been baptized; Yea, it will rise up against us at the last day, and aggravate our Condemnation.* Rom 2. 27.

Secondly, Let me further admonish those that are sound in the Faith, that they stagger not in their Profession, nor be induced to a love of Errors, through the strictness of the lives of those that are Erronious. Indeed, there is so little shew of Reason, or plain Scripture, for most things in which our Sectaries differ from us, that the Opinions themselves yield little of powerful Temptation, to the embracing of them. But, the greatest thing that is apt to make people of good affections to stagger, is the strict lives of many that take these courses: But yet if we seriously consider this, it doth not afford so strong a temptation, as at first view

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Apoc. 17.  
4.

it seems to do. That *Whore of Babylon*, of whom these people talk so much, is said to have a golden Cup in her hand, full of abominations, and the filthiness of her Fornication. The *Papists* are many of them of as strict lives, as our *Sectaries*: And their *Monks*, and *Jesuits* deliver as strict rules for the ordering of our Conversation; as any men can; and have as sublime and spiritual notions, many times, in the Interpretation of Scripture: But if I meet with, and approve these things in one leaf, and in the next, find *blasphemous* expressions of honour to the blessed Virgin, and other Saints, and prayers put up unto them; shall I therefore close with their Errors and Idolatry, because I find something amongst them which I love? Yea, the *Jews* and *Turks*, who are at this day the professed enemies of Christ, are for the most part as faithful in their word, as just in their dealings, and of as strict and temperate lives, as our *Opiniators*: But this shall never make me to love Judaism, or Mahometanism the better. He was not a wise child that threw the whole Apple away, because some of it was rotten; nor yet he that greedily eat up the rotten together with the sound; but he that pared out the rotten, and fed upon that which was sound: So they do not well who cry out against a Profession of Religion, and strictness of life, because these things are to be found among them that are erroneous: Nor are they to  
wise

wise as they should be, who because they see many things commendable in the *lives* of those that differ from us, do therefore turn to an embracing of their *Errors* and *Schisms*. But this is the truly wise and christian course, To love that which is good in every man, to love and *imitate* the strictness and *circumspection* of their lives, yea, to let them know that they do not outdo us therein; but yet to *avoid* and abhor their *Errors*.

Indeed a man were not fit to be an Heretic, if he were of a lewd life. *Nullis acornita bibuntur Fœdilibus; tunc illa time,* &c. Satan hath the better advantage in tempting men to drink this *poysen* of errors, by dazling their eyes with the lustre of the golden *Cup* in which he presents it. Let us labour to be so wise as to examine the principles, as well as the practises of those with whom we close, and not rashly to joyn with persons of strange principles, though of never so strict lives.

3. It will greatly concern us all to take heed of spiritual *pride*, and *self-conceitedness*, as that which will greatly hazzard our standing fast in the Faith. We have seen in our time many stately Cedars blown up by the roots, those that have been very high and lofty, not only for natural Gifts and Knowledge, but, at least for a shew of a very high measure of zeal for God; yet how have they been overturned by those turbulent winds of strange Doctrine. It behoves us there-  
fore

Rom. II.

20.

fore to take the *Apostles* exhortation: Be not high minded, but fear. We should not be puffed up so as to scorn or despise those that are fallen, but pity them, as knowing that we also are men subject to the same infirmities, if God should leave us to our selves. We should not entertain high thoughts of our own strength, because we have stood fast thus far, as if we had been supported by our own abilities; or as if it were not possible for such as we are, to be deceived: For as there is nothing more displeasing to God than pride, and of all pride spiritual pride is the worst; so nothing is more likely to provoke God to leave us to our selves, than these high thoughts of our own strength.

Beside, Reason and Experience shew, that confidence doth usually invite men to carelessness, and that prepares men for a fall: Had men been well ballasted with Humility, they would not have been so far tossed with this sail of self-conceit, as to despise the teachings of those that are called to that Office, and to think themselves wiser than their teachers, so as to prefer their own bare groundless conceits, before all the Reasons and Scriptures that can be produced to the contrary, and their own fancical wresting of Scripture, before the plain and obvious meaning of it, and the concurrent judgment of the Church of God in all ages concerning it. Were men so lowly in esteeming of themselves, that they could be

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perswaded that it is possible for them to be in a mistake, they would not add such *obstinacy* to their errors, but would be in a fair way to be convinced: And therefore, as that which will expose us to great and apparent danger, let us take heed of confidence and self-conceitedness.

14. It will behove us to take heed of a loose and unsettled spirit, in matters of Religion: The Apostle exhorts him that thinketh he standeth, to take heed lest he fall: And the first thing requisite, to taking heed lest we fall, is, to see that we stand upon firm ground. Ships that are floating on the Sea, are tossed to and fro with every wind and storm, whereas the beating of the Waves against a Rock, doth not move it, but onely dasheth themselves to pieces against it. How dangerous a course do they take, who, though they do not profess any palpable errors, yet shew a great *indifferency* of spirit about points of great concernment; and are not affraid to bear Errors, as well as the Truth, taught; nor do they fear any infection thereby, but rather live between Truth and Error, as if each of them were equally their proper Element.

1 Cor. 10  
12.

I think every man that is well in his wits, would both account it hazzardous to his bodily health, and also a tempting of Divine Providence, to adventure into infectious Houses, or Companies, under the confidence of an healthy constitution; or of

trust-

*trusting* Gods Providence to preserve him in one place, as well as another. And if the soul be the more precious part, they must needs be esteemed to run a greater hazard, who will adventure to *dally* with all sorts of Principles, till at last they have brought themselves to a careless *indifferency*, and a *Laodicean luke-warmness* in matters of Religion.

Which frame of spirit, as it is very *displeasing* to God, arguing want of a due measure of love to him, and thereby provokes him to *give men over to their own hearts lusts*, to *walk in their own counsels*: So it doth dispose the mind (Reason and Experience being Judges) to *neglect* that industry which it ought to exercise in contending for the Truth; yea, to a readiness to entertain Error, as soon as Truth; and is indeed the foundation of that *Scepticism* in matters of Religion, which makes them utterly to seek in the points of our Faith: And this (if Gods mercy interpose not) is the high way to lead men to *Atheism*.

5. It will greatly concern all such as desire to stand fast in the Faith, to *avoid seducing Teachers*, and to keep close to the *publick Ordinances*: *Solemon* exhorts us to *cease from bearing the instruction that causeth us to err from the words of Knowledge*; and to *watch daily at Wisdoms gates*. Certainly, many people by going from Gods blessing in his publick Ordinances, into that warm  
sun

Psal. 81.

12.

Prov. 19.

27.

Prov. 8.

34.

sun which they have fancyed in turning aside  
 to the flocks of the companions; have found Cant. 1.  
 the same success which Dinah did, by wan- 7.  
 dring from her Fathers house, out of a vain Gen. 34.  
 desire to see fashions: They have had the 1, 2.  
 virgin purity, and chastity of their souls, ra-  
 vished from the truths of God, by the lust-  
 ful embraces of them that have lien in wait Ephes. 4.  
 to deceive: God in his just judgment seeing 14.  
 it meet to deliver them up to their own ways;  
 who would not keep themselves in his ways;  
 in which onely God hath promised, that his  
 Providence shall keep them. And therefore Psal. 91.  
 it will greatly concern every man that de- 11.  
 sireth to keep in the Wayes and Truth of  
 God, To seek Christ in going forth by the foot-  
 steps of the flock, to feed their Kids beside the Can. 1. 8.  
 Shepherds tents. Not to forsake the assem-  
 bling of themselves together in Gods Houle, as  
 the manner of too many is. For, The Priests Heb. 10.  
 lips should preserve Knowledge, and the people 25.  
 ought to seek the Law at his mouth, for he Mal. 2. 7.  
 is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts. Those  
 that meditate on these things, and give them-  
 selves wholly to them, that give attendance to 1 Tim. 4.  
 Reading, as well as to Exhortation and Do- 15.  
 ctrine, may reasonably be expected to be far  
 more likely to understand the Truth them-  
 selves, and to guide others unto it, then  
 they that onely cast aside their worldly busi-  
 ness, and adventure suddenly and boldly to  
 open their mouths, not having so much as  
 considered what they are about to speak in  
 the

the Name of that God who will not be mocked, nor hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.

From the publick Ordinances, we may comfortably expect benefit to our souls:

Jude  
v. 20.

1. John 3.

Psal. 63.

5.

Psal. 73.  
28.

Psal. 87.

2.

By these, we have, by gracious experience, found our souls to be built up in our most holy Faith, and refreshed as with marrow and fatness. Whereas those that have forsaken them, have forsaken their own mercy, and shewed before the world a sensible decay in that which is good. And therefore, let us

conclude with David, It is good for us to draw near unto God: And as the Lord doth, so let us love the Gates of Sion, more then all the dwellings of Jacob.

## CHAP.



## CHAP. XII.

*Five seasonable and profitable Admonitions, commended to the Consciences of them that are either wavering, or already seduced to the embracing of Errors.*

**H**AVING spoken these things to them who through Divine assistance, do yet stand fast in the Faith; let me now add a few words of Christian Counsel and Admonition, to them who are either fallen into dangerous Errors, or *wavering* and enclining towards them. What the Apostle saith of the *unbelieving and obstinate Jews*, I may seriously and truly say of such persons: My hearts desire and prayer to God for them, is, that they may be saved: For I bear them record, that many of them have a very ardent zeal for God, but not according to knowledge: Yea, as the same Apostle speaks of the same people, I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart, in behalf of many who are drawn like incautious Birds, into the snares of them that have so cunningly laid wait for them.

I know that many judicious persons will

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- be ready to pluck me by the sleeve, and say *Quis leget hac?* We can hardly expect that such men to whom these words are directed, will vouchsafe these things the reading, and much less that they will bestow an impartial and serious consideration upon them. We
- Jer. 6. 10. may cry out with the Prophet: *To whom shall I speak and give warning that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the Word of the Lord is to them a reproach; they have no de-*
- Acts 28. *light in it. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted and healed.* However, the Sower that soweth the Word of God, must cast his Seed abroad, though he see but little that is good ground and likely to bring forth fruit answerable to his desires. *Who can tell but the Lord may direct his Word as an Arrow to hit them between the joints of the Harness,* though they have armed themselves against it, with so much prejudice and resolvedness in their own ways: *But whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear (for they are most rebellious): yet shall they know that there hath been a Prophet among them.*
- Ezek. 2. *5. 1. Let me entreat and exhort all such, in the fear of God, and as they love their own souls, to remember from whence they are fallen*
- Apoc. 2. *6.*

*Willen* : to remember the years that are past, and consider what the temper of their souls was then. See what the *Apostle* saith to the *Galatians*, and apply it to your own consciences, *You know how that through much infirmity of the flesh, we, and other Ministers, preached the Gospel to you at the first: those Ministers whom you sometimes heard, and in whom ye delighted were men subject to the like infirmities with us: And yet our temptation which was in our flesh ye despised not, nor rejected us and the Gospel for those infirmities; but received us even as Angels of God, and as those that brought glad tidings of Jesus Christ unto you: and did esteem the very feet of them that brought these glad tidings, to be so beautiful, that if it had been possible, to do us good you would even have plucked out your own eyes, and given them to us. But where is now the blessedness that ye then spake of? Is not the Word of God as good as it was then? And are we become your enemies because we do tell you the truth, and the very same truths that were preached to you then? Let me ask of you: Do not we preach the same Doctrine, and profess the same Faith, as they did whom you followed formerly with so much diligence? I believe, you cannot deny it: Or, if you think us to be changed, this is but like the thoughts of one in a Ship, who when he puts off from the Land, conceits the Shore to move back from him, whereas it is the Ship onely that moves,*

Gal. 3.  
13, &c.

while the Shore remains where it was. Your *Seducers* may possibly suggest such thoughts unto you: of whom I may say with the Apostle, *They zealously affect you, but not well; they would exclude us, that you might affect them.* Zeal indeed is very useful and commendable *vers. 18.* while it is rightly imployed, *It is good to be zealously affected alwayes in a good matter:* But it is a very dangerous thing to be zealously carried forward in a *mistake.*

I pray, Ask your own consciences (I speak this to them that are serious, though misguided, in their profession) Whether your consciences were not in a better frame when you frequented the publick Ordinances; then now they are? Did not the Word of God relish better with you, so that you *esteemed it more then your necessary food, more precious then gold, yea, then fine gold: sweeter also then honey, and the honey-comb?* *Joh. 23. 12.* Were you not more constant in thole family and Closet-duties, of which every good Christian makes conscience? Had you not a more kindly sense of your sins upon your souls, and more child-like sorrow for them? Had you not more love to God and his people? Well, *Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first works.* *Apoc. 2. 5.* And say with them, *I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now.* *Hos. 2. 7.*

2. Let me ask you (and I pray be serious in answering); Where did you first receive the  
the

the foundation of that *light*, which you so much talk of? How came you first to know any thing of God, and of the things that appertain to your Salvation? Was it not by attending upon that Ministry, which you now despise as *Antichristian*? You did not bring this knowledge into the world with you: And you could not learn it in private Meetings, seeing many of the elder sort of you profess your selves to have had something of the knowledge of God, before you frequented these Meetings; yea, before there were any such Societies for you to joyn with: And therefore, if you will deal fairly, you must acknowledge those sparks to have been kindled in you, by the preaching of the Word of God as the means. And how can you possibly so far rub all modesty out of your Fore-heads, as with such confidence to pronounce that Ministry *Antichristian*, which was the means first to discover the true Christ to you? Or do you think your selves to deal ingenuously in setting so foul a foot upon that step which first raised you from the ground; and casting away that ladder which helped you up, that it may not stand to upbraid you with the help it hath given you? Is not this, wantonness of spirit and a spiritual fulness, which keeps you from hungering and thirsting after the Word of God? that makes you loath the Manna of Gods publick Ordinances, and so long for flesh of your own fancying?

Luk. 5.  
39.

Were it not better to acquiesce in our Saviour's Judgement in this case: *No man having drunk old wine, straight-way desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.*

Joh. 7.  
51.

3. Let me intreat and admonish you, not to condemn the Church of England, without examination. Doth our Law (which Nicodemus) judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth? Certainly, no good Lawes, nor any sober Christian will, judge and condemn any person or thing, without hearing and considering the matter. Let it please you therefore, first to be so much your own friends, as to take the pains to cast out the leaven of malice and prejudice, out of your hearts (for these blind the eyes even of the wise, that they cannot see that which is most palpable); And then lay before you the Doctrine of the Church, of England contained in the Creeds which we own, in the Catechisms of the Church, and in the Articles of our Religion: As also the Liturgy of our Church, which contains our daily prayers, and the manner of administering the Sacraments, and performing the other Offices in the Church. And compare these with the Confessions and Services of other Churches: and see where you finde any Church that is more Orthodox and pure in every respect: yea, if you finde any thing in it which to a sober and impartial mind doth so much as appear to be contrary to the Scriptures.

If you would take this pains, I should verily expect to see a great number of those that separate from us, to flock like Doves to the Windows, yea, like good Christians to the bosome of Gods Church. If you will not, judge your own selves whether your error be not inexcusable, in your departing from, and disowning and opposing those things which you do not so much as understand. *Si accussasse sat est, quis innocens fuerit.* It is meerly to cavil, and rail, and calumniate, be sufficient to confute the Doctrine and practice of a Church; without doubt the Church of England hath been as profoundly confuted as possibly can be imagined. It is one of the easiest parts of wit, that consists in finding faults with others, and representing what is practised by them, as odious and ridiculous. There was never any thing so well devised by the wisest of men, but he that had a malicious minde and a peevish tongue, might represent as a very strange Monster, when he had first dressed it in clothes of his own devising. Nor any thing so evil and pernicious, but those that loved it, would find something to say for it. No marvel then that we have met with so many Pamphlets stuffed with Queries, and Cavils, and Calumnies, to which the best Answer that can be given, is, *The Lord rebuke thee* thou evil spirit, which art the cause of these divisions of Reuben, that are the occasions of so many sad thoughts.

of heart to all sober and Religious person.

But setting aside these Cavils which come not from the heart, at least not from a heart seriously desirous to be satisfied; Will you do your selves the right to come to us, who are *Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God*, as you come to your Lawyer or Phyitian; move such scruples touching the way of our Church, as do really trouble you; shew forth such a spirit as doth not come to cavil, but to be informed: and see if (I will not say we, but) your own mindes will not suggest an answer to what you can reasonably object against our Church.

1 Cor. 4.  
1.

4. Be serious and ingenuous in answering me one Question more: Do those whom you follow into corners teach you the *same* Doctrine which we teach in publick? or do they teach that which is *contrary* to it? If they teach that which is contrary, we are able fully to confute them by sufficient Scripture-Arguments: yea, there is not any one of these many errors which are taught by them that *creep into houses*, but it hath been fully and solidly confuted by the publick Ministry; to which nothing can be replied, but obstinacy and resolvedness to be deceived.

If you say, they teach the same things that we do, Why do you not come to hear them from us? who are likely to teach them more

more profitably, as being both better qualified, by giving our selves wholly to these things, and applying our selves daily to searching of the Holy Scriptures, and to the setting in order profitable and acceptable words; and withal being orderly called to this Office by them who had authority to lay hands upon us? May not we say to you as King Abijah to the Israelites? *Have not ye cast out the Priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and have made you Priests of the lowest of the people?* But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him: and the Priests which minister to the Lord are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: And they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt-Sacrifices and sweet Incense, &c. And though you have gone on in the gain-saying of Corah, and say with him and his company, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift you up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* Yet may we answer you as Moses did them: *Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi, that affect the Priest-hood it self: and ye are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, who are we the Ministers of the Lord, that ye murmur against us?*

5. Consider and lay to heart the sad spiritual judgements, which God hath inflicted upon many of those that separate themselves

selves from the publick Ordinances. Is it  
 not observable, that the most of them are  
 given up to a spirit of giddiness and insta-  
 bility, so that they cannot tell where to fix  
 when once they have forsaken their first  
 Foundations: Is it not easily to be observed  
 how many of them have taken their degrees  
 from one error to another, till they have  
 even outdone themselves, and their first  
 thoughts in forsaking the Church? Hath it  
 not been sadly evident in many that have  
 2 Thef. 2. not received the love of the Truth, that they  
 10, 11. might be saved; that God for this cause hath  
 given them up to strong delusions; that they  
 should believe a lye? Yea, have not many of  
 2 Pet. 2. 1. them brought in or received in damnable here-  
 sies, even denying the Lord that bought them?  
 Besides the presumption and self-willedness  
 that is written in their fore-heads, despising  
 of government, and speaking evil of dignities:  
 And (that nothing might be wanting a-  
 mong them of those characters, whereby  
 the Apostles do decipher the Hereticks of  
 the latter ages) they speak evil of those things  
 which they know not; but what they natural-  
 ly know, as brute Beasts, in these they corrupt  
 themselves: they are murmurers, complainers,  
 walking after their own lusts, and their mouths  
 speak great swelling words, having men per-  
 sons in admiration because of advantage: these  
 Jude 8. are they who separate themselves, sensual,  
 16, 19. having not the Spirit. Yea, are not many of  
 them grown to looseness and licentiousness  
 of

of life, and to an utter neglecting of those Religious duties in their Families and Closets, which belong to every good Christian to perform? to spend all their Zeal rather in opposing what is held and practised by others, than in holding or doing any thing that is good themselves.

Now these things have befallen them, to the end that they might be Examples to us, that he that thinketh he standeth might take heed lest he fall: And that we seeing the sad condition of so many unstable souls, may be the more diligent in prayer, and watching over our selves, lest we also being drawn away with the error of the wicked, do fall from our own steadfastness. But that we may endeavour to grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: To him be Glory both now and for ever. Amen.

1 Cor. 10.

11, 12.

2 Pet. 3.

17, 18.

FINIS.

of life, and so an utter neglecting of those  
 religious duties in their families and  
 churches, which belong to every good Chris-  
 tian to perform: to spend all their Zeal in  
 their inordinate what is held and gratified by  
 others, when in looking on doing any thing  
 that is good themselves.

Now these things, I have bestowed them, to the  
 end that they might be examples to us, that  
 we that think to be faithful might take heed  
 to be so: and that we being the last con-  
 sideration of many wretched souls, may be  
 the more diligent in prayer, and watching  
 over ourselves, lest we also being drawn away  
 with the error of the world, do fall from our  
 own steadfastness. But that we may understand  
 to grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our  
 Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: To him be  
 Glory both now and ever. Amen.

F I N I S

THE  
NATURE and DANGER  
OF  
A Misguided Conscience.

A  
S E R M O N  
Preached at the  
VISITATION

OF  
Mr. ARCH-DEACON of SARUM,  
Held

At Warmister, April 27. 1664.

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By Paul Lathom, M. A.

---

John 16. 2. *Yea, the time cometh, that who-  
soever killeth you, will think that he doth  
God service.*

---

Printed by T. M. 1666.

THE  
NATURE and DANGER  
OF  
A Mislaid Conscience.

A  
SERMON

Preached at the

VISITATION

OF

MR. ARCHDEACON OF SARUM.

Held

At Westbury, April 27. 1664.

By Paul Lombard, M.A.

John is a. Ten. the time towards that we  
know. Will you will think that he says  
of us.

Printed by T. M. 1664.



To the Reverend  
**The DEAN and CHAPTER**  
**Of the CATHEDRAL**  
**At**  
**SARUM.**

Reverend Fathers, and Brethren,



*He two later of the ensu-  
ing Sermons are yours  
of right, as being preach-  
ed in your Cathedral,  
and owing very much to  
your Candid and Chri-  
stian attention. The other, that goes  
before them by order of Birth-right,  
may fitly be joyned with them, as tend-  
ing to promote the same common end  
with them and the foregoing Tract.*

*I take the boldness to tender them  
all*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*all Three, as a Testimony of the reverential, and cordial Respects I owe you; and of that Thankfulness which is due for the favourable Respect wherewith you have been pleased to look upon me, and to encourage me in exercising your Patience with my Discourses from time to time.*

*I shall beg the help of your good Prayers, for the rendring these small Pieces as succesful as they are necessary, in these unsettled Times.*

*Long may you live to be burning and shining Lights, in that Golden Candlestick; that the light of your pious Lives and powerful Doctrine, may reprove the works of Darknes; and that they who have said, Let us take to our selves the Houses of God in possession, may in due time be ashamed of their furious and preposterous zeal. This is the hearty desire of*

*Warmister,  
March 1.  
1665.*

*Your Servant in the  
work of the Gospel,*

*Paul Lathom.*

THE



THE  
NATURE and DANGER  
OF  
A Misguided Conscience.

---

Acts 26. 9.

*I verily thought with myself, that I  
ought to do many things contrary  
to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.*



How reverend and sacred  
the Authority of Conscience is, may be evident,  
partly by the ready Consequiousness that all good men  
shew to its Commands; and partly by the proneness  
of Impostors, to affix the hand and seal of  
Conscience, to their counterfeit Forgeries;  
together with the readiness of men of good  
meanings, but ordinary understandings, to  
M yield

yield obedience to those *delusions* that come authorized with this Name. And as in all *Courts* (especially of great Jurisdiction) 'tis a great joy and happiness to the people, to see Order and Justice in their proceedings, and a great Burden and Misery, when it is otherwise: So it was a great happiness to man, when this great Court of Conscience was settled in due order, and is now as great a misery since it is become so many wayes *corrupted*.

Look how beautiful and lovely is the face of a well-ordered State, where the Prince commands with singular *Wisdom* and *Justice*, and the Subjects yield Obedience with due *Loyalty* and *Humility*; so amiable a piece was the Soul of man, when the Understanding and Conscience did govern the other faculties with *rectitude* and discretion, and the will and affections did most *readily* obey, and put in execution these rightful Dictates. And if we consider how ungrateful an Object a disordered State affords to the eyes of them that view it, when either *Tyranny*, or *Folly* do usurp the place of *Soveraignty*; or else *Faction*, and Rebellion take place of that *Loyalty*, and Dutifulneis that should be in those that are subject: We may from thence conclude how deformed the state of mans *soul* is now become, since Ignorance and Error have clouded the Understanding and Conscience, where the seat of *Soveraignty* of right ought to be placed, and  
Fro-

Forwardness and Contumacy have raised the will and sensitive Affections, to a rebellion against the commands of Reason and Conscience.

Whether of these two, the *weakness* of the *Commanding*, or the *disorder* of the *Obeying* Faculties of mans soul, be of greater mischief both to our own selves in particular, and also to the Community; I shall not now strictly enquire or determine. But certainly, as in the *Body Politick*, when *delirant reges, plebuntur Achivi*, the errors of the Leaders will turn to the prejudice of the Followers; and as in the *Natural Body*, an error in the first Concoction, is hardly rectified in the second: So in the *Soul*, an error in these leading Faculties hath a very pernicious Influence upon the Will and Affections, to the depraving and debauching of them. When mens *Consciences* are *misguided*, they will easily be induced both to an eager *loving* and desiring, and to an impetuous *prosecuting* of that which is *evil*, because their own mistakes and delusions do represent it as *good*; and thereby offer great violence to a good Conscience, while they pretend to obey the Dictates of Conscience.

It may therefore be of very good use, to *obviate* this Distemper of mens minds, which is both *Dangerous* and *Epidemical*, by shewing them the *causes* of this disease, and something also of the *Diagnosticks*, which will

be a good step toward the learning of its cure. And a Discourse of this Nature and Tendency, as it is to these times, a word in due season; so it will be very properly grounded upon the words I have read unto you, which shew us the confession of the Apostle Paul, concerning his former condition, that he had been so far misguided in his Conscience, that he verily thought with himself, that he ought (or was bound in conscience) to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Which words are part of the Apostle Paul his Apologetical speech, before Agrippa and Festus. This Appearance is reckoned by those that are skilful in Chronology, to have been in the 57th year of our Saviour, and in the second year of Nero's reign, before the time that his rage against the Christians carried him forward so far as to wash his hands in their blood. Claudius, indeed had set out a Decree to banish all Jews from Rome, of which we read, *Act* 18.2 and thereupon Aquila, & Priscilla Christian Jews, among the rest were forced to come out of Italy. But this Edict did not concern them, because of their profession of Christianity, but because of their being of the Jewish Nation. And the late Reverend and Learned, D. Hammond, tells us, that in the reign of Claudius, St. John was banished into the Isle of Pathmos, and quotes Epiphanius for the proof of it. But Nero was the first of all

all the Roman Emperours, that began to persecute the Christians, as such; as the aforementioned Authour proves from the words of Tertullian, *Primum Neronem in hanc Seculam gladio ferocuisse*: Nero was the first that put men to death, for the profession of Christianity. This persecution by Nero, was not begun when the Apostle made this Speech; and therefore in defending himself, as he doth not shrink from the profession of Christ, for fear of shame or punishment, so he pleads *Not guilty*, as to the breach of any Law of the Romans, by any thing he had spoken or done; and therefore claims the privilege of a Roman-Citizen, notwithstanding his being a Christian, and hopes to be delivered by appealing to Caesar, chap. 25. 11.

This I thought necessary to put you in mind of, that you might the more easily apprehend the purport of the Apostle's speech, and how Agrippa could truly say in *vers. 31.* the end of this Chapter, that Paul had done nothing worthy of death, or of bonds, by the Roman Laws; though his being a Christian, was very evident by his own Confession.

Now for the substance and scope of this Speech, I shall set it before you in a few Words. After the Preface, *vers. 2. 3.* wherein he insinuates into the affections of Agrippa, before whom he was to plead his Cause: he sets forth the manner of his former life, *vers. 5. 7* That he had been a Pharisee, of the strictest

Sect amongst the Jews : and that now he did not differ from his former Principles, any  
*vers. 6, 7.* further than that he *did believe those Promises to be already accomplished, which all the twelve Tribes did hope for,* onely they were not yet convinced, that they had took effect in that Jesus whom they had put to death. Then he endeavours to perswade his  
*vers. 8.* hearers, both of the possibility of God having raised up Christ from the dead; and also of the present unbelieving Jews being mistaken in that Zeal, or rather Fury, which they shewed in opposing Christ, and persecuting those that did profess his Name. And, that they might not be too confident of their being in the right, he tells them that for his own part he had been formerly of the same minde with them, and had spent much pains in opposing and persecuting those that believed in Jesus Christ, until such time as it pleased God to work in him a saving conviction of the error of the way he had been in; which he goes on in relating, in the following Verses.

So that the words of the Text, considered with reference to what goes before, are an Argument intended for the perswading of the King and the rest of the Auditory, that it was possible for the Jews to be mistaken in their zeal against Christ, seeing himself had been made sensible of his mistake in following their principles, and being zealous for them. Considered in themselves, they  
 are

are the Apostles acknowledgement of his former mistakes, and of the *misguiding* of his Conscience therein: he tells us that he had not, in his unregenerate estate, persecuted Christ and his followers, out of malice, but through mistake: he did not believe him to be the Messiah, but an *Impostor*, and that he was bound in Conscience to do many things, even the utmost that he could, *contrary to the Name and Profession of Jesus of Nazareth*.

Instead of a more exact or artificial division of the Text, I shall resolve it into two Positions, which the Apostle points at herein, and of which he endeavours to convince his hearers.

1. Position, *That a mans Conscience may be so far deluded, as that he may verily think himself bound in Conscience to do that which is amiss.*

2. Position, *That this mistake or misguiding of Conscience, doth not excuse those irregularities which men run into through it.*

The consequence of these, from the scope and design of the Apostle's confession concerning himself, is so clear to every man, that seriously observes his meaning, that I shall not trouble you with spending time in making it out, but presently apply my self to the opening of the Positions in order.

1. Position, *That a mans Conscience may be so far deluded, &c.*

M 4

As

As for the Latin word, *Conscientia*, and our English word, *Conscience*, some give this Etymology of it: *Conscientia*, *quasi Cordis scientia*; but that seems too remote: Or, *Conscientia*, *quasi concludens scientia*, because it concludeth or passeth sentence for, or against a mans self: Or, *Conscientia* from *Con* and *Scire*, because it doth, as it were, joyn with God in seeing and taking cognizance of our ways. The Greek word is *συνησις*, which, as some observe, is used about thirty times in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, we once meet with the word (*Madagna*) from (*Jadang*) to Know, *Eccles. 10. ult.* which is there translated, *Thoughts* or *Conscience*. But most commonly, that which in the New Testament is called *συνησις*, in the Old Testament is called (*Leb*) the Heart. So *Dauids heart* is said to smite him, that is, his Conscience, and the people are exhorted to lay it to heart; that is, to their Conscience. And sometimes the New Testament useth the same word, as,

1 Sam. 24. 5. *smite him*, that is, his Conscience, and the  
 Mal. 2. 2. people are exhorted to lay it to heart; that is, to their Conscience. And sometimes  
 1 Joh. 3. If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than  
 30. our hearts, &c.

We have seen the *Quid nominis*. Now for the *Quid rei*: Conscience may be described thus: It is a power or faculty, of the practical part of mans Understanding, whereby we are enabled to judge, of our selves and our actions, according to the Rule of the Law of God.

In this Description there are five terms worthy our consideration.

1. The *Genus* of Conscience, is, a *Power* or *Faculty*. That Conscience cannot so properly be stiled, either an *Act* or an *Habit*, I think is plain enough; and therefore it is most properly termed a *Power* or *Faculty*, wherewith God hath endowed the *Soul* of Man. But in the Scriptures, as Faith and Love are sometimes used to signify the *Habits* of those Graces, and sometimes the exercise of them: So Conscience is sometimes for the *actings* or *dictates* of Conscience, as when the Apostle tells the people, That he *had lived in all good Conscience*, that is, according to the dictates of Conscience: 1. sometimes for the *Power* or *Faculty* from whence these actings proceed, as when he saith, He *had exercised himself herein*, to have *alwayes a Conscience void of Offence*. Acts 23. 16.

2. The *Seat* of Conscience, is said to be in the *practical* part of our Understanding. It is peculiar to *understanding* Creatures, to have a Conscience; and the more clear any mans Understanding is, *ceteris paribus*, the more refined are the motions of Conscience in him. And, that Conscience is seated rather in the Understanding than in the *Will*, is evident, in that Conscience will many times do its office, though the Will do hang back never so much. And further, we say 'tis seated in the *practical* Understanding, be.

because as the office of the *speculative* Understanding, is, to judge of *Truth* and *Error*, so the *practical* judgeth of *Good* and *Evil*.

3. The *Office* of *Conscience*, is, to *judge*. The judgement that *Conscience* passeth, may be conceived to be in such a way as this. What the *Scripture* approves, is good and to be followed: But the *Scripture* doth approve this: Therefore it is good and to be followed. What the *Scripture* condemns, is evil and to be avoided: But the *Scripture* condemns such and such courses: Therefore they are evil and to be avoided. Some *Divines* say, that in the *major* proposition, *Conscience* is *Lex*: Though I think that expression not to be very proper, because *Conscience* doth not lay down this Law by its own Authority, but takes it from the Word of God, yet so as to assent to the Authority of it: and in this respect *Conscience* is sometimes called *custodians*, because it keepeth the Law of God in our minds. In the *Minor* Proposition, *Conscience* is called *Testis*. In the *Conclusion*, *Judex*.

4. The *Object* of this Judgement, is, both our selves and our actions. Concerning our selves, or our own Condition towards God, *Conscience* passeth judgement in this sort: The *Scripture* saith, He that truly repenteth of his sins, and resteth by Faith upon the Merits of *Jesus Christ* is in the way

way to Eternal life; but he that goeth on still in his trespasses obstinately and securely, is in the broad way that leads to the Chambers of death. Now accordingly as Conscience findes our Condition to be, either penitent or impenitent, so it pronounceth us to be either in a good or bad way. Concerning our *actions* Conscience passeth Sentence, partly *before* we enter upon them; and as it findes them either agreeing with, or contrary to the will of God, so it either encourageth us to them, or dissuades us from them: partly *afterward*, and then by the same rule of the agreeing of our actions to the Will of God, or opposing of it, so Conscience doth either accuse or excuse and commend us for what we have done.

5. The Rule by which Conscience ought to proceed in judging of our Persons and Actions, is, the *Law of God*. This Law is either that which was *written* upon mans heart, which though sadly defaced by the Fall, yet some remainders of it are to be found in all men, and according to this the Heathen that know no other Law, are to Rom. 2. judge of their actions: or else that which is 14, 15. written in the Holy Scriptures, and according to this all of us should judge our selves and our actions. It will not be sufficient that our Consciences speak peace to us, and tell us that our actions are good, and our selves in a good estate, except this judgement of Conscience be grounded upon the Word

Word of God. For if we hold Conscience to be the *supream Judge*, and that we are to attend wholly to it, without looking to any other Rule, hence will follow a two-fold *absurdity*. 1. Hence it will follow, that Conscience is *infallible*: and so those that bestow so much Zeal in crying out against one *Antichrist*, will set up many *Infallibles* in his stead, even as many as be of this *Opinion*. But, that Conscience is not infallible, may be evident by this, that one mans Conscience doth (at least in pretence) dictate that which is quite contrary to the dictates of another mans Conscience; and therefore one of them must needs be supposed to be in a *mistake*, and consequently not infallible. 2. It will also follow, that a man would alwaies do *right*, when he acts according to the *dictates* of Conscience. But, that this is not true, is sufficiently evident by the example of *St. Paul* here before us, who before his Conversion did verily think himself bound in Conscience to do what he did against *Jesus Christ*; but this did not bear him out in it, as you will see more fully anon.

You see then the *Nature* and *Office* of Conscience, which will open our way for setting before you the dangerous *mistakes* of Conscience. The office of Conscience, you have heard, is, to take *cognizance* of, and pass a *judgement* upon our actions, according to the *Rule* of Gods Law; so as to encourage or discourage us before we enter upon them,

them; and to accuse or excuse us, after we have done them. And herein chiefly lies the *mischievous* mistake of Conscience, that either it self doth erre by *mistaking* its Rule, and thereby comes to pass a wrong *judgement* upon our actions: or else (which may as probably be imagined) something else *intrudes* into the Office of Conscience on purpose to deceive us, by encouraging us to that which is evil, and dissuading us from that which is good; accusing us when we have done that which is good and commendable, and excusing us when we have done that which is evil and unwarrantable. And by this means men are not onely *drawn* to evil courses, but *encouraged* and *hardned* in them, whilst they conceit themselves to follow the motions of Conscience, though all the while they are doing that which is quite contrary to a good Conscience.

Now there are especially *three things* that are ready to step into the seat of Conscience, and to delude us into a belief that we are led by Conscience, when we are stirred up by a worse principle, and do those things which are contrary to the right dictates of Conscience.

1. Sometimes the *strength of Fancy or Imagination* usurps the office of Conscience, and makes men believe they are prompted by Conscience to do such and such things, when it is nothing but *Fancy* that hurries them

them forward. It is strange to observe how powerful Imagination is, not onely to carry men violently forward in their motions; but also to disguise it self so subtilly, that men will strongly conceit themselves not to be conceited in what they do. If we look to the *Sanguin-Fancies* that proceed from such a Constitution of the Body, how many remarkable stories have we both of the *Anabaptists* in Germany, and of many *Ranters* and *Libertines* in England, who under the lowd cry of Conscience, and Liberty of Conscience, have onely hunted for game to satisfie the foul lust of Uncleanness? Yea, and made the silly people of the world (if not themselves among the rest) to believe that even *uncleanness* it self should not be filthy, nor unlawful, while it did gratifie persons so highly in the favour of God, as they were confident to pronounce themselves to be. It is not indeed so strange, as it is sad, that such persons have prevailed so far, as to impose upon many of the injudicious Vulgar with these pretences: but that they could so far delude themselves as to conceit that they were acted by Conscience and by the Spirit of God, in these courses, seems a very great Wonder. The chiefeft Reason I can give of the prevalency of this delusion, is, that these Fancies move them with so much violence and impetuousness, being helped forward by *Satan* who watcheth all opportunities to ensnare the soul, that the poor de-

deluded soul is ready to conceit it self to be moved by some extraordinary impulse of the Spirit of God, and so gives it self up confidently to the lustful embracing of a Cloud, in the shape of *Juno*.

And for that other humour of *Melancho-ly*, 'tis strange to observe the effects of it upon the Fancy; this useth to beget *sowre* and *sad* fancies. And the stories which Physicians and Historians relate concerning the effects hereof, are so strange, that they would seem incredible to vulgar ears. And doubtless in many 'tis a *sowre* and *melancholick* temper of body (and *pride* together) that is the cause of their *severe* inclination, to dislike and find fault with whatsoever is practised by others; and to effect a strange and *unconth* way of living, under the notion of *Mortification*, and *Denying* of themselves. And in good people also, the prevalency of this Temper, is many times conspicuous: To this, many of their groundless *Doubts* and fears, as to their spiritual Estate, do owe their beginning: which though they represent themselves as the fruits of *tenderness* of Conscience, and are seldom or never to be found, but in persons of truly tender Consciences (as many bad weeds do not grow, but in the best soyl;) yet they are evil in themselves, as being a *false* judgement passed upon our selves, and a *denying* the great things which God hath done for our souls; and as to their *tendency*,  
which

which is ordinarily the hindering of the soul from its *vigorous* actings in good duties, and from taking due *comfort* in the performances which Gods Spirit hath carried it through: These I say, are to be imputed to the constitution of the body, helped on by Satans Temptations.

If any enquire, upon hearing this, How we may *distinguish* these workings of *Fancy* from the true and genuin Motions of *Conscience*? and truly know what *impulses* we are to follow, and what to reject? I answer,

1. Look to the *Constitution* of thy Body; or if thou hast not much skill in such matters, be content to receive the *advice* of those that are able and competent Judges of it. Art thou of a *sanguin* Constitution, and findest the motions that sollicit thee to a prosecution of them, to be of that nature? Or art thou naturally inclined to *Melancholy*, and findest such motions in thee as are suitable to that humour? It will be a great right done to Conscience, to forbear to impute those motions to it, which our own Reason may shew us to come from another cause.

2. Observe when the temper of thy Body doth *alter*, and see whether these motions and inclinations do alter with it. It is sufficiently evident, that the temper of mens bodies doth admit of alteration. The Sanguin temper will alter by *age* or *sickness*

ness, or worldly cares: The Melancholick will vary by change of *Air*, or *Dyet*, or by the use of *Physick*; beside those *lucid* intervals wherein most Melancholick persons do meet with an *abatement* of that humour. Now ask thy own experience, whether these motions do not ebb and flow, according to the abating and encreasing of these Distempers in thy body? If so, there is great reason to impute these motions and inclinations, not to Conscience, but to the temper of thy body; and it would be a great wrong to the sacred name of Conscience, to father them upon it.

Secondly, Even the motions of *Lust* will sometimes deceive us, under the pretence of being the dictates of Conscience. This may seem very *strange* to them that have never been willing to put themselves to the trouble of examining the motions, which they have followed; whence they have come: But it is very palpable to every man, that with a discerning eye, and unbiassed mind, looks upon them. Sometimes the lust of the *Eye*, *Covetousness*, and *Ambition*, lapps it self in the Mantle of Conscience. Come see my zeal, for the Lord of 2 King: Hosts, saith *Jehu*; when every man knows 10.164 that it was somewhat else, and not true zeal, that made him drive so furiously. Yea, some may go so far as not only to deceive others, but themselves also, in this point; as, in their denying *Tythes*, and other *Payments*,

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'tis too too palpable, that Covetousness hath taken the place and office of Conscience; and yet sets so bold a face upon it, as if it were pure Conscience that guided these men to such practises. Sometimes that lust of *malice* and *revenge*, may put us forward to serve it under the notion of Conscience! So the Scribes and Pharisees persecuted Christ out of malice, and yet with a great shew of Zeal and Conscience: And those others, of whom our Saviour foretels, that they would persecute his Apostles, and *verily think they did God good service*, in doing it. Now if any enquire of the manner how these lusts come to prevail so far as to deceive us under the name of Conscience, I need say no more then I did upon the former Head, *viz* That the *Impetuosity* of these motions in the mind, may be apt to make us mistake them for some extraordinary *Inspirations*, which we ought not to resist. But to undeceive us in this point, it may be very useful to consider,

1. That what motions soever do encline us to any thing that is *forbidden* by the Law of God, are evil and to be *rejected*: Now the motions of lust, do alwayes stir us up to do that which is contrary to Gods Law, and therefore are to be *opposed*, though never so suitable and grateful to our sensitive appetite. To the Law and to the Testimony we ought to look, and whatsoever persons or
- moti-

Joh. 16.  
2.

Isa. 8. 20.

motions are contrary to that, this very thing is sufficient to convince us, that they are not of God.

2. If we find our selves to be zealously carried forward, onely in *some things* that tend to our own profit, or pleasure, and careless and remiss in *other things*, we have great reason to conclude these zealous motions, not to proceed from Conscience, but a worse Principle. *Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel*, and was very zealous in it, as that which was a fair pretence for cutting off the house of *Ahab*, that none might be left to lay claim to the Crown; and also to dazzle the eyes of the people, that they might not rise up in opposition to him, who shewed himself so zealous in executing the Lords pleasure: *But from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the serving of the golden Calves at Dan and Bethel, from these he departed not*, because he thought the continuance of this, to be a good piece of policy, to keep the people from returning to *Jerusalem* to worship, lest they should also carry back the Kingdom to the House of *David*. Hereby *Jehu* did discover, that it was not zeal for God, but Covetousness and Ambition, that made him so strict in obeying Gods commands in other respects: And if any man find the same temper and tendency in his zeal, he will have just reason to suspect the same things concerning it.

2 Kings  
10.18,  
29.

3. Satans temptations and suggestions may sometimes impole upon men, under the notion of Conscience, and inspirations from the Spirit of God. The Apostle tells us, that Satan hath an art to *transform himself into an Angel of light*; to reprelent his temptations, as the advice of some good Angel, or as the motions of the holy Spirit of God. He had the impudence to cite the Scripture in his tempting of our Saviour; and therefore it is no marvel, if he seduce so many ignorant people to pervert the Scriptures, for the encouraging of themselves to do that which is quite contrary to the meaning of the Scriptures. Yea, we have very strong reasons to perswade us, that those *raptures* and *Enthusiasms*, which have possessed some of them, have been nothing else, but an higher degree of the *working of Satan* in them. And that they may not think we use them hardly in spending such a censure upon them, let them but consider how many of them, under the *pretence* of these *Inflincks*, have encouraged themselves in *Murthers*, *Adulteries*, and other the greatest sorts of Impieties, which are no way imputable to the motions of the *Holy Ghost*, who as he is a most pure and holy Spirit, so is he far from inclining any man to that which is *impure* or *unjust*, but doth abhor such practices himself, and stirs up all those that are acted by him, to the utmost loathing and abhorring of them.

Now

Now for *distinguishing* the temptations of the evil spirit from those motions that come from the good Spirit of God, I shall, to what was spoken upon the former head, add onely one Rule, viz. That it will greatly concern us to observe the *tendency* of these Motions: The Spirit of God, as it doth not move us to any thing that is evil in it self, so neither to any thing that tends directly to the producing of evil. And therefore, If any motions that seem never so specious, that look like Angels of Light at their first appearance, do yet tend to draw us to evil in the issue; if they tend either to draw us to any gross impiety or dishonesty, if they designe to draw us to the venting and maintaining any dangerous or *strange Doctrine*, or to the making of *rents and divisions* in the Church; we have reason to reject these, as *suggestions* of Satan, however they may make a shew of advancing us to higher attainments then ordinary. And thus we have seen, how the Conscience may be imposed upon so far, that men may think verily, that they ought, or are bound in Duty and Conscience, to do that which is really amiss.

They  
may  
adorn  
w<sup>th</sup> g<sup>h</sup>  
prop<sup>er</sup>  
to g<sup>o</sup> m<sup>o</sup>  
y<sup>e</sup> H<sup>o</sup> D<sup>o</sup>

I proceed to the other Position, *That* <sup>2 Position</sup> *this mistake or misguiding of Conscience, doth not excuse or warrant those irregularities, which men erroneously run into.* It is not sufficient for men to plead Conscience for what they do, that their Conscience binds them to do this, and to abhor the other;

except they can shew sufficient grounds for these motions and inclinations that are imputed to Conscience, this will not warrant them in what they do. This, I think, is so clear, that it cannot but be received by every serious and sober person, so that I shall not need to spend many words for the confirmation of it: onely let me entreat you to consider,

1. What the Apostle *Paul* speaks of himself, who is a notable instance to this purpose. While a person is distempered in minde, he is not capable of judging how sad a condition he is in; but when he is recovered out of it, then is he very sensible of the sad condition he was formerly in, and of the great cure that hath been wrought in his recovery. So men that are under these delusions of Conscience, are not competent judges of their own actions; but *St. Paul* who recovered out of this condition, may more properly be heard to speak in this case. He tells us in the Text, that he did not persecute Christ out of *malice* towards his person; but because, through the *misguiding* of his Conscience, he did not believe him to be the true *Messiah*: But doth he think this sufficient to warrant, or yet excuse his persecution? No, for notwithstanding this, he calls his sins by their proper names, and acknowledgeth himself to have been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15, 16 and injurious; yea, the chief of sinners, and such

such an one that it was a great wonder that ever the Lord had shewed him mercy. He tells us that he had persecuted the Church with Zeal as hot as fire. But doth he think that the heat of his Zeal would awarrant the irregularity of his actions? No, but tells us that he was the least of the Apostles, and not worthy the name of an Apostle, because he had persecuted the Church of God. And what we have said of the Apostle Paul, in his unregenerate estate, we may say of the generality of the Jews of that age, that they had a Zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. And what they did unto our Saviour (the common people denied the Holy One and the Just, and their Rulers killed the Prince of Life) St. Peter bears them witness that they did it through ignorance, both the People and Rulers. But shall we think that this did excuse so horrid a fault? No, the Apostle tells them that for that very sin, The wrath of God was come upon them to the utmost, and so hath continued for so many hundreds of years. Yea, the Turks and all other Heathens and Idolaters, are doubtless given up to such blindness of minde, that they verily conceit themselves to do well in worshipping their false gods, and defying the onely true God, and his Son Jesus Christ; but I hope, no man is so senseless as to think that these mistakes of their Conscience do excuse, much less awarrant, their transgressions.

Phil. 3. 6.

1 Cor. 15. 9.

Rom. 10. 2.

Act. 3. 14. 15, 16.

1 Thes. 1. 15, 16.

2. *Reason* bears witness to this Truth; for we have shewed before that the proper Office of Conscience, is to judge according to the Law of God. And, as the opinion of a *Judge*, who is bound to adhere to the *Laws* of the Land, doth not make that to be Law which is contrary to the written Laws; it being very unreasonable to think that his transgressing the bounds of his Office, should excuse another, that adventures to do that which is forbidden : So Conscience, which is bound to proceed in judging according to the Law of God, if it neglect this *Rule*, cannot awarrant a man in doing that which is contrary to this Rule. And it would be very unreasonable for any man to imagine that these mistaken dictates of Conscience should excuse him that follows them, except Conscience were the *Suprema Law*; the contrary whereof I have shewed before.

I have done with the *opening* of the Positions, and shall next proceed to the *improving* of them, by drawing several practical Inferences from what hath been spoken.

1. Inference.

1. This may shew us what great need we have to be very circumspect and cautious in trying those motions that present themselves under the Notion of Impulses of Conscience. It will concern us, not rashly to believe, or obey those motions in our selves; that pretend to come from Conscience, till we

we have first tryed them, whether they be not the *Impulses* of our *Imaginations*, or the *clamours* of our *lusts*, or the *voice* of Satans *suggestions*. Nor yet too credulously to believe all the *pretences* that other men make to Conscience. And there be several dangerous *Symptoms*, whereby it will appear very evidently, that men are either not at all acted by Conscience, in what they do, or (at least) by a mistaken and deluded Conscience.

First, When men are very strict and scrupulous in some things, and very careless in others. Then shall I not be ashamed (saith David) when I have respect to all thy Commandments. This is a good sign of a truly conscientious person, when he hath an even and equal respect to every part of Gods Law: So to do one as not to leave another undone. But, on the contrary, as in the Body, we reckon it a sign of a distempered stomach, when the appetite is carried out to an inordinate longing after some sorts of food, which is attended with a fastidious nauseating of others: so in the soul 'tis a sign of a Conscience that is out of order, when men are more then necessarily strict and scrupulous in some matters, and careless of keeping other commands: when men are not careful both to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. Mat. 22. 2.

2. Especially, if men spend a great deal of

Mat. 22.

38.

Mat. 5.

19.

Mat. 23.

23, 24.

of Zeal, and make a great stir in the World, about *smaller* and less considerable matters, and in the mean time are cool and remiss in matters of greater moment. Indeed, all Gods Commands are great, and the least of them is not to be slighted: but, as our Saviour speaks of a *first and great Commandment*, and elsewhere of *one of the least of his commandments*: So he makes it a sign of an hypocritical Conscience, when men *strain at a gnat and swallow a camel*; when they took special care to *tythe mint, and annis, and cummin*, but neglected the weightier matters of the Law, *Justice, and Mercy, and the Love of God*: So if we see men that had rather *kill a good Minister*, then *hear a good Sermon*; rather *pull down the houses of God*, then come to *worship God* in them; rather *starve their Pastour*, then *pay him their Tythes*; rather *cut off a mans head*, then *move their own hat*; we may very reasonably doubt that 'tis no well-informed Conscience, that puts them upon spending so much zeal and industry about such trifles and nicities.

3. If men do what they do, rather to *gratifie* their own *honours*, than to *please* God and benefit his Church. Those are truly good works, and acceptable to God, as proceeding from a right Christian spirit, which are the Fruits of pure *obedience* to Gods Law, and done with a true design to *please* God, and to *further* the good of his Church.

Church. And therefore if men embrace *opinions* and *crochets* in Religion, or *Heterodox singularities* in their practices, not so much because they believe them to be acceptable to God, but because they suit with their own *humours*; If men are so in love with what they have conceited to be convenient, that (though themselves cannot but believe and confess it to be an indifferent thing) yet they will not *depart* an hairs breadth from their own humours; though their compliance in such things, would tend never so much to the peace of the Church, and the good of the *Community*; if there be not *humour* and *pride* at the bottom of this, yet certainly there is but little shew of a *well-informed* Conscience.

4. If men are stiff and zealous in their courses, for this end, that they may *advance* their *fortunes* in the world thereby. He that is truly conscientious, doth not onely talk much of *the glory of God*, but doth indeed and truth make it his utmost end. And therefore if we see men fickle for novel *opinions* and *conceits* in Religion, and betake themselves to *parties* and *separations*, and embrace odd kinde of *singularities* in their lives, onely that they may be taken notice of beyond other people by being of another *Colour*: If men plead hard for such things, in the advancing of which, and opposing the contrary, they have greatly *promoted* their worldly estates; though these  
later

later may seem to shew somewhat of a grateful spirit towards those things that have been good *benefactors* to them, yet neither  
 Act. 19. fort shew any better Zeal then *Demetrius*  
 25. and his crafts-men did in crying out against *St. Paul* and his Doctrine, not that they cared so much for the honour of *Diana*, but because *by that craft they had their wealth.*

5. If men spend much Zeal in finding faults with *others*, but little or none in reforming what is amiss in *themselves.* *Tiberius* in *Tacitus* observed it to be the temper  
*Tacitus* of men of *mutinous* spirits, *Accusare tantum*  
*Annal.* 1. 3. *vitia, & deinde cum gloriam ejus rei adepti*  
*sint, simultates facere:* They sought for applause, and the Title of pious men, onely by loud exclamations against the faults of other men; and when they had raised their credits amongst the vulgar by these arts, then upon this stock they set up a Trade of *Faction* and *Sedition.* And when we see men spend all their time and zeal in censuring, and reviling, and scorning at the practices of others, while in the mean time they are careless of themselves, and neglect to reform what is amiss in their own *lives,* we may conclude that, if there be not *Sedition,* to be sure there is little of *Conscience* at the bottom: for the office of *Conscience* (as you have heard) is, to judge, not other mens persons or actions, but chiefly, and in the first place, *our own.*

6. When

6. When men avoid and despise the means of Conviction, it is a signe that their Consciences are not in right order. Every truly conscientious person makes it his earnest desire, in the first place, not to do amiss; and, next to this, that he may be made sensible of his errors, and brought back into the right way when he hath wandered from it. And those therefore that make it the first principle, which they teach their Disciples, to forsake and despise the publick Ordinances, for fear lest they should be convinced of the errors which they are running into, do make such a Covenant with them, as Nabash desired to do with the Children of Israel, To thrust out their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon Israel: And they shew that they have rather taken a strong fancy to their own Conceits, then that they have a well-informed Conscience, and a sincere desire to do as they ought.

1 Sam.  
11.2.

By these and such like Rules, we may both try those motions that we find in our own minds, whether they proceed from a well-informed Conscience or no: And also may give a guess at those who are about us, whether they be in good earnest, and well-advised in their large talking of Conscience in their proceedings. And that I may prevail with you to lay these things to heart, let me add, that 'Tis a business of great importance, to have our judgments well informed

formed in this point: and that I shall briefly demonstrate, by shewing in *two words*, the great *hazzard* that men run in entertaining their own fancies, or the motions of lust, or the suggestions of Satan, for motions of Conscience.

First, While men embrace these delusions, they sin at a more *dangerous rate* than other men; in that they go on the more *earnestly* and *confidently* in evil, while they think they do *God good service* in doing it: And further, they are harder to be *reclaim- ed* than a prophane person, *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool, then of him.* Besides that they *aggravate* their sins, by taking the sacred name of Conscience in *vain*, while they pretend it to Patronize them in that which is evil.

Prov. 26.  
12.

Secondly, When such men come in *cool blood* to consider what they have done, and to find out the mistakes they have committed under the thoughts of being acted by Conscience, it may be in danger to make them *cast off* all Conscience, and turn *Seek- ers* in matters of Religion, which are next door to *Atheists*. Add to this, that the *ex- orbitant* courses which many have taken under pretence of being led by their Conscience, hath sadly opened the mouths of prophane persons, to *scorn* at Conscience it self, and take no care to keep a good Conscience, or to do that which is agreeable to it.

2. It may be very wholesome and seasonable Advice, to endeavour rightly to inform our selves in the nature of the true *Christian Liberty*: which will be one special help to the due information of our Consciences, in many controverted points. It is most certain, that, beside the Liberty which Christ hath purchased for us from his Fathers wrath, and from the thralldome, and slavery of sin and Satan; there is likewise this further Liberty which every Christian may comfortably expect under this New Covenant, that was not to be enjoyed under the old, *viz.* That if the *sincere purpose and desire* of our soul be to please God, and this desire do shew it self to be real, by a constant and *diligent endeavouring* to walk in those wayes which are acceptable to God; our gracious and merciful Father will not be extream to mark those *defects* that proceed from the *infirmity of our Nature*, but will cover our imperfections, and accept of our Obedience, through the perfection of Christs obedience. And further, that in *things*, which in their own Nature are truly *indifferent*, there is much Liberty allowed us by God, provided still that our desires be towards his Glory in what we do.

Now as the due apprehension of this would be of great advantage to us, to make us go on the more cheerfully and comfortably in his service; so for want of being duly informed about it, the soul doth sustain much

much prejudice. Some, by *overstretching* the Nature of Christian Liberty, have proceeded to turn the Grace of God into wantonness; and others, by not understanding how far this Liberty doth extend, have incurred great prejudice. For;

1. Hence have proceeded *endless and unprofitable scruples* in the Conscience. The word *scruple* (as some say) comes from that *dust or gravel in our shoes*, which, though small in it self, yet gives us great trouble being in such a place. And so, Scruples in the Conscience, though small and inconsiderable in themselves, yet do greatly disturb the mind. Indeed, when men pretend to scruples in small and indifferent matters, while they can take too much Liberty in matters that go nearer to the life of Religion; 'tis a signe that their Consciences are sick of a *Pharisaical disease*. But yet 'tis sufficiently evident, that the *sobereſt and truly conscientious* people are much disturbed in their minds with such scruples, as even themselves are sensible that there is little weight in them. And though this trouble doth argue a sincere desire in the soul to please God, yet 'tis of bad consequence, as tending to disturb and *distract* the soul in good duties, and to take off that *cheerfulness* which ought to be in us, in serving so good a Master.

2. Hence a man may come to a *doubting Conscience*. Divines distinguish thus between a scrupulous, and a doubting Conscience.

science. A *scrupulous* Conscience, is, when a man is satisfied in the main, of the lawfulness of an action, but yet there are some odde inconsiderable thoughts in his mind which trouble it: A *doubting* Conscience, is, when a man doubts in the main of the lawfulness of the action. And accordingly they resolve that against a scrupulous Conscience a man *may*, yea sometimes *must* of necessity proceed, but not against a doubting Conscience: Now through ignorance of the due extent of this Christian Liberty, a man may come to these doubtings of Conscience, which will quite put him to a stand in many things.

3. From this a man may come to that which Divines call, a *perplexed Conscience*, which involves a man in a kind of necessity of sinning. That there is such a perplexed estate of Conscience, may be evident by such an Instance as this. Put the case that a lawful Authority enjoyn us something about a matter which in its self is *truly indifferent*: If a man doth not yield obedience to it, he sins against the *fifth Commandment*, and if he doth yield obedience, and yet doubts that the thing he doth is unlawful, though he doth not *formally* break any of Gods Commandments, yet *virtually* he doth, in yielding to that which he *believes* to be *sinful*, and so falls under that censure of the Apostle, *Rom. 14. 23*. It is indeed a *sad* case when the soul is involved in such a perplexity.

plexity. But God is not the Authour of this occasion of sin, for he made the Conscience upright, and 'tis the fall of man that hath brought upon it this and all other disorders. And forasmuch as you have heard that the mistake of Conscience, doth not excuse the irregularity of an action, it will therefore concern us the more diligently to study the true Christian Liberty, that we may not at any time come to this pass.

3 Infer-  
ence.

3. Let me add a word of *Caution*. Let no man from what hath been spoken, take occasion to *make light* of Conscience. Because you have heard that Conscience may be, and is many times *deceived*, let no man hence conclude that all pretences to Conscience, are either *counterfeit* or *erroneous*: That all men who pretend to Conscience, are either Deceivers, or deceived.

Conscience is a *Sacred* thing, and of *Sovereign* authority with all good men. And those wicked men that will not hearken to the *voice* of Conscience in this world, but cast away its cords from them, shall in the world to come, find it turned to a *Worm* that shall gnaw, and torment their souls to all eternity.

4 Infer-  
ence.

Lastly, To you *Fathers and Brethren* of the *Clergy*, my speech directs it self. Forasmuch as it is evident, that the misguiding of mens Consciences is so common and dangerous a disease, and there are so many *Seducers* abroad, that lie in wait to deceive them

them into this inconvenience: Let me therefore take the liberty to put you in mind, whose Office obligeth you to be *Guides* to mens Lives and Consciences; that you use all possible diligence in the *rectifying* those mistakes which impose upon mens Consciences; and *cut off* all just occasion from them that are ready to *seek occasion* for delivering up their minds to be seduced to an embracing of that which is evil. Let us put no advantage into the hands of false Teachers, that make it their business to deceive ignorant and well-meaning people: Nor let us justly provoke such people to deliver up themselves as a prey to those Foxes and Wolves. And to this end, give me leave to commend to you this two-fold word of *Exhortation*.

1. To be *diligent* and *constant* in preaching such sound Doctrine as may both *exhort* the people to that which is good, and also *convince* Gain-sayers. Let not the people have any just occasion given them to follow these grievous Wolves, because those that should teach them, are *dumb Dogs*, that either can-  
 not, or will not bark, and look after nothing, Ira. 56  
 but every man his gain from his quarter. 11. Let  
 them find that the Priests lips do preserve  
 Knowledge, and that it is the best course for  
 the people to seek the Law at their mouths, who  
 by their Office, are the Messengers of the  
 Lord of Hosts. Mal. 2. 7. Let's take the Apostle's Exhortation: *Preach the Word, be instant in season,* 2 Tim. 4.

- and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with  
 2 Tim. 2. *all Long-suffering and Doctrine.* Let us shew  
 15. our selves Workmen that need not be ashamed  
 of our work, and such as are not a shame to  
 our Work and Profession; but rightly divi-  
 ding the word of Truth, so as to carve to eve-  
 ry man his portion. And withal, There  
 Tit. 1. 11. are some whose mouths must be stopped, who  
 creep into Houses, and lead captive silly people.  
 2 Tim. 3. 6. And these we must confute (if they will not  
 be convinced) with sound Doctrine, that  
 the people may see the reasonableness of the  
 truths which we preach, & the unreasonable-  
 ness of the errors that are taught in corners.  
 And for those that are impetuously obstinate  
 in their errors, I doubt not but our Church,  
 which hath waited for their return with  
 2 Cor. 10. 8. much long-suffering, will seasonably exer-  
 cise towards them, that power which God  
 hath given, for their edification, and not for  
 Acts 20. 28. their destruction.
2. We must also take heed to our selves as  
 well as to our Doctrine, that we give no ad-  
 vantage to false Teachers, to insinuate into  
 men of good Affections, a fancy to leave  
 the Church, because of the scandalous lives  
 1 Tim. 4. 12. of them that are publick Preachers. Let us  
 be to the Believers a pattern, not onely in word,  
 but also in Conversation, in Charity, in Spi-  
 rit, in Faith, in Purity. Remember how  
 1 Sam. 3. 13. God did punish Eli's house, when his sons,  
 by their wicked lives, made men to abhor  
 the offerings of the Lord. Remember what  
 God

God threatens to the Priests, *Mal. 2. 2, 3.*  
 and 8, 9. Remember also our Saviours words, *Mat. 5.*  
*Ye are the salt of the Earth; if the salt have* <sup>17.</sup> *lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?*  
*It is thenceforth meet for nothing, but to be*  
*trod under feet of men. Let us therefore* *1 Tim. 4*  
*take heed to our Selves, and to our Doctrine,* <sup>16.</sup>  
 and then we may hope that we shall be In-  
 struments to promote the salvation of our  
 selves, and of those that hear us. However,  
*Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall we be* *Isa. 49. 4.*  
*glorious in the eyes of the Lord: And our judg-* <sup>5.</sup>  
*ment shall be with the Lord, and our work with*  
*our God: Though evil men and seducers shall* *2 Tim. 3.*  
*wax worse and worse, deceiving and being de-* <sup>13.</sup>  
*ceived, yet we having discharged the parts* *Ezek. 3.*  
*of faithful watchmen, shall have delivered* <sup>19.</sup>  
*our own souls.*

Now the Lord of his mercy, inform the  
 Consciences of those that are erroneous, and  
 soften the Consciences of prophane sinners, *Acts 24.*  
 and give us all grace to keep Consciences void <sup>16.</sup>  
 of offence, toward God and man, in this world;  
 that so when we have fought our good fight, and *2 Tim. 4.*  
 finished our course, and kept the Faith unto <sup>7, 8.</sup>  
 death, we may at death receive the Crown of  
 Righteousness, through the allsufficient merits  
 of Jesus Christ: To whom, with the Fa-  
 ther, and the Holy Ghost, let us give, as is  
 most due, all Honour and Glory, world  
 without end, *Amen.*

F I N I S.

1871

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THE  
SUBTILE and PESTILENT  
NATURE  
OF  
Seducers.

A  
SERMON  
Preached in the  
CATHEDRAL  
AT  
SARUM

Upon  
St. Marks Day, 1665.

---

By Paul Lathom, M. A.

---

1 John 1. 4. *Beloved, believe not every spirit  
but try the spirits, whether they be of God;  
because many false prophets are gone out  
into the world.*

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THE  
SIXTH AND TENTH

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RECORDS



THE  
Subtile and Pestilent Nature  
OF  
SEDUCERS.

---

Ephes. 4. 14.

*That we henceforth be no more Children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive.*



THE Gospel written by St. Mark (whose memory we celebrate this day) hath in all Ages been received as Canonical Scripture. But there hath been some difference amongst the Learned concerning the Person that wrote it: some

*The Subtile and Pestilent*

some affirming it to be written by that *Mark* whom *St. Peter* calls his Son, 1 *Pet.* 5. 13. Others supposing the Author of it to be that *Mark* who was also called *John*, the Son of *Mary*, of whom we read, *Acts* 12. 12.

That he whom *St. Peter* calls his Son, was the Evangelist, I suppose to be beyond controverſie; the onely doubt that remains, is whether he was the ſame with *John-Mark*, the Son of *Mary*; or another perſon of the ſame name. This I cannot finde abſolutely determined by the Learned and Judicious: and therefore ſhall leave it in the middle.

It is agreed that this *St. Mark the Evangelist* was the firſt Biſhop of *Alexandria*, as *Dorotheus*, tells us: and that he preached the Goſpel to all thoſe parts, from *Egypt* even to *Pentapolis*. The time of whoſe Preaching the Goſpel in *Egypt*, *Bucholtzer* determines to be about the 44<sup>th</sup>. year of Chriſt. Concerning the time when he wrote this Goſpel, no certainty can be gathered out of Hiſtorians, ſaith *Bullinger*. But *Eusebius* reports it to be preſently after the conſuſion of *Simon Magus*, which was in the Reign of *Nero*, and about the 68<sup>th</sup>. year of Chriſt. And yet *Bucholtzer* in his Chronology reports from *Eusebius* (I ſuppoſe his *Chronicle*) that *St. Mark* did ſuffer death four or five years before this time. So that the moſt Learned and diligent ſearchers of Antiquity, are

*Buchol.*  
*Chronol.*

*Euseb.*  
*Eccl.*  
*Hiſt.* 1. 2.  
c. 15.

are not free from over-sights especially in Chronology. But this by the way.

For the occasion of the writing of this Eccl. Gospel, *Eusebius* relates it thus, out of *Clement's Alexandrinus*. That, after that wonderful confusion of *Simon Magus*, the Christian Religion began so much to flourish and encrease amongst them that had heard St. *Peter* preach, that they were not content to hear these things once, nor to receive them by unwritten Tradition; but earnestly desired St. *Mark*, that he would write down for them the substance of that History of Christ, which they had received by word of Mouth. And ceased not, till they had prevailed with him. And thereby they gave occasion to the writing of that Holy Gospel, which we to this day enjoy the benefit of, and which bears the name of him that wrote it. Hist. l. 2. c. 15.

And again *Eusebius* writes further out of *Papias*, that St. *Mark* being St. *Peter's* attendant and Interpreter, did accurately write down what he had heard from St. *Peter*: not indeed in the same order, as they were spoken or done by our Saviour, for he was not one of them that heard and followed Christ, but onely heard St. *Peter*, and wrote what he retained in his memory from his preaching. And therefore he is not to be condemned, for that he doth not follow the Method of the other Evangelists, seeing he did not design a full Commentary of all things Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. ult.

*The Subtile and Pestilent*

things that Christ had done and spoken, but onely to relate with faithfulness, what he did retain in his memory.

Hist.

Eccl. 1.6.

c. 24.

1 Pet. 5.

13.

And further, the said *Eusebius*, relating a Catalogue of the Books of Canonical Scripture, out of *Origen*, he speaks of this Gospel written by *St. Mark*, that he wrote it according to the direction of *St. Peter*, who in his aforementioned Epistle calls him his Son.

The death of this Holy Evangelist is referred to the Reign of *Nero*, and the 63d. year of Christ, by *Bucholtzer*, in his Chronology. But *Dorotheus* refers it to the Reign of *Trajan*, and describes the manner of it, thus: That at *Alexandria*, in the place called *Bucolus*, he had a Cable-rope put about his neck, and therewith drawn from *Bucolus*, to a place called the Place of the Angels, and there by the Idolaters burnt to death in the Moneth of *April*, and his bones buried in the *Bucolus*. This account I thought meet to trouble you with, concerning this Holy Evangelist *St. Mark*.

The Text you know, is part of that portion of Scripture appointed by our Church to be read as the Epistle for this day. In the beginning of which Portion, the Apostle sheweth us that the variety of those gifts which God hath bestowed upon divers members of his Church, are the fruits and benefits of *Christ's Ascension*: And that the end

end of all the Officers, both extraordinary and ordinary, which he hath appointed in the Church, is for the benefit of the whole, *ἵνα τὸν κατασκευάσῃ, for the perfecting or* Vers. 12.  
*knitting together of the Saints:* And for the *work of the Ministry, to fit men to serve him*  
*in the daily administration in the Church:* and for the *edifying of the Body of Christ,*  
*for the building up of the Church, and* further instructing of those that are come  
 into it. *Till we all come in the unity of the* Vers. 13.  
*Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of*  
*God, till Jews and Gentiles come to be one*  
*sheepfold under one Shepherd, and till we*  
 be grown up to that perfection of Know-  
 ledge, as will speak us to be men of Sta-  
 ture. And then he proceeds, in my Text,  
 to shew one of the great Benefits which we  
 hope to reap from those Officers whom  
 Christ hath appointed in his Church, and  
 from our being built up in Knowledge and  
 Holiness, by their Ministry, that we shall  
 be settled in the unity of the Orthodox  
 Faith, against all the assaults of those that  
 are enemies to the Truth. *That we hence-*  
*forth be no more Children, tossed to and fro,*  
*and carried away with every wind of Doctrine,*  
*by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness,*  
*whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

In which words, we may observe *two*  
 parts.

1. The causal particle of conjunction, *that,*
2. The

2. The subjects spoken of, included in the verb (*ἔσμεν*) *we be*.

3. The condition they had formerly been in, which had disposed them to receive prejudice; and that is expressed in the word, *νήπιοι*, *Children*.

4. The prejudice, which they had been apt to receive in that condition, which is set forth in two very Emphatical words, *κλυδωνιζόμενοι*, and *περιφερόμενοι*, *tossed to and fro*, and *carried about*.

5. The instruments of doing them this mischief, set forth in those words, *παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας*, *the winds of strange Doctrine*.

6. The *Authours* and *Promoters* of this mischief, which are set forth in those words, *ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἐν πανουργίᾳ προδὲ τῆν μεθοδίαν τῆς πλάνης*. *By the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*.

While I go over the illustration of each of these parts, and improve them to our instruction and Edification, I shall be bold to beg your serious and candid attention.

*1 Part.* I begin with the leading part of the Text, the *Conjunction* which connects these words with what went before. *Pulchre in Metaphorâ a viro perfectio sumptâ perseverat*, &c. saith *Mesander* upon this Text. The Apostle had been mentioning it but now, as one of the special benefits which we receive

ceive by those Officers which Christ hath appointed in his Church; that we might be built up from the condition of Children, to that of grown men; or men of stature in the Faith. And here he proceeds further in setting forth this benefit, that being come to the stature of men in the knowledge of Christ, we should now put away *childish* things; *wavering* and *irresolution* of minde in matters of Faith; and set our selves as men to stand fast in the Profession of that Faith, into which we have been Baptized: Our Learned Doctor Hammond doth express the sense of this illative particle to the life thus: *Which may secure us that we henceforth, &c.* So that this Conjunction doth readily offer us this Note. That the continuance of a powerful and painful Ministry in the Church, is one special expedient to establish people in the Faith, and to settle them against the seducements of false Teachers.

The truth of this is so evident to every mans Observation, that I shall need to say very little for the clearing of it. To the Office of a Minister it belongs, to shew the people the ways of Truth which they ought to follow, and by so doing, they must needs at once shew them the by-ways of error which they ought to avoid. For, *Rectus est index sui & obliqui*. To the Office of a Minister it appertains to exhort and admonish the people that they be not drawn away by the error of the wicked, to depart from their

2 Pet. 3.

16.

own

own steadfastness, but rather to grow in Grace. Now the words of the wise, saith Solomon, are as nails to fasten men, and as goads to stir them forward in that which is good, when they are fastned by the wise Masters of Assemblies. And therefore the labours of such may probably be expected to be effectual, through Gods blessing, to stablsh, strengthen, and settle mens mindes against the tempestuous Winds of erroneous Doctrines. From hence then,

Eccl. 12.  
11.

1. We may see that it is no wonder, that they whose design it is to seduce the people to errors, do bear such a bitter and implacable hatred to the Ministry: that they have spent their mouths so liberally, in bestowing upon them and their Function, all the Calumnies and scurrilities, which the malice of Hell could invent: that the subtilest spirits amongst them by attempting to take away their ancient and settled maintenance, have designed to stop their mouths by starving them, except they would learn, *cum psittaco sum* *χῆρε*. The Wolves in the Fable, when they had made War against the Sheep, would admit of no accommodation, except upon these terms, that they should deliver up the Dogs of the Flock; intending thereby, that the removal of these, should make way for their quiet and secure preying upon the Flock. Every man may easily see how *Mutato nomine, de his fabula narratur*. These grievous Wolves whose design is to prey

prey upon the Flock, knowing full well that the Ministry is the greatest defence of the Flock, and offence to them; cry out by all means to have these taken away, that they might securely prey upon the Flock, when none was left to oppose them.

2. Hence we see likewise what reason we have to be very thankful to God, for appointing and continuing this Office in the Church. That our Lord Jesus Christ, when he ascended up on high, gave gifts to men to fit them for this work: that he hath held these Stars in his own right hand, mauger the Fanaticke rage of erronious and illiterate miscreants. It is easie to imagine, what an Egyptian darkness would have over-spread the face of our Church, if these Stars had been removed. Let us therefore be thankful to him that hath upheld these, and that they still shine amongst us, both to shew us the right way to heaven, and to discover and shame the dark and absurd Doctrines of men of unsound and corrupt mindes.

Rev. 3. 1.

3. We learn hence, whereunto we that are employed in this honourable and weighty Office of the Ministry, ought to apply our selves, even to be instant in season and out of season, both exhorting the people to the practising of good Duties, and also convincing gain-sayers with such speech as cannot reasonably be gain-said, that so those that are

Tit. 1. 9  
& 2. 8.

P

con-

*Contrarily minded may be ashamed, and those that are in the right may be encouraged to stand fast in the Faith. And though men of unsound heads may esteem this way of preaching to be galling and unpleasant, yet it being our duty, we must not neglect it: And we should the more be engaged to faithfulness, by considering those that are committed to our charge; which leads me to the*

- 2 Part. II. Thing in the Text, the *Subjects* here spoken of, included in the *Verb*, *Quia*, (*we be not*). You shall seldom see Hereticks to attempt the seducing of lewd and prophane persons: for they know that such are a disgrace to any Profession or Cause, to which they adhere or wish well: But their great design is to pervert them that have in some measure escaped the pollution of the world, through the knowledge of Christ: because they are sensible that the fame of the innocency and strictness of the lives of those that are retainers to their ways, will make men of good affections and weak judgements, to have the greater kindness for, and inclinations towards their opinions. And indeed such is the subtilty of these false Prophets, that, as our Saviour saith, *They would deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect*. Now, these words of Christ, may give us a fit opportunity to enquire concerning these subjects (*we*) how far Gods *Elect* and *Sanctified* ones may
- 2 Pet. 2.  
20.
- Mat. 24.  
24.

may be led away with the *error* of the wicked, so as to depart from their own steadfastness? In answer whereunto, I say,

1. That it is certain that such shall never fall away to such errors as will be *incon-*  
*sistent* with Christianity, and the holding of which would shew a man to have left that one *Foundation*, besides which no other can be laid. The Apostle speaks of some Here-  
ticks that should *bring in damnable doctrines*, *even denying the Lord that bought them*. Now  
we say, that none that ever had true Grace in his heart, shall be totally given over to such errors, so as to live and dye in them. *Peter* indeed denied his Master three times; but he was in a little while *convinced* of his sin, and went forth and wept bitterly. But to persist in errors of this Nature, is inconsistent with a state of Grace. Though there are diversities of *Physiognomies* amongst men, yet all have the *faces* of men: And though true Christians may have different thoughts about some points, yet they all hold fast the *Foundation* of Christianity. And this we may make use of

1 Cor. 3.

11.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

First, To comfort us as to any of our Friends or those whom we wish well unto, that are either ensnared, or in danger to be ensnared in errors. If they be such as truly fear God, we may comfortably conclude, that though they fall, yet they shall rise again, be-  
P 2 cause

Pfal. 37. *cause the Lord upholdeth them with his hand.*  
 24. *And Christ hath prayed for them, as he did*

Luk. 21. *for Peter, that their faith do not utterly fail.*

31. 2. It may shew us how to judge of them  
 that are quite departed from the foundation  
 of that Faith into which they were baptiz-  
 ed: even as the Apostle doth in the like  
 1 Joh. 2. case. *They went out from us, because they*  
 19. *were not of us; for if they had been of us, they*  
*would have continued with us: but they went*  
*out from us, that it might be manifest that they*  
*were not of us.*

Secondly, But yet we say that in matters  
 further off from the Foundation, those that  
 are of truly gracious and honest hearts, may  
 erre and be deceived. Amongst the sons  
 of men, there is such variety of Features  
 in their faces, that no two are in all points  
 alike; and yet are all concluded under the  
 general name of *men*. And amongst the  
 minds of men, there may be great variety  
 in smaller matters, and yet while they hold  
 fast the foundation, we are not to exclude  
 them from our charity, as if they were no  
 Christians. And this may serve

1 Cor. 4. 1. *For caution; they that think they stand*  
 7. *fast, have need to take heed lest they fall: And,*

Rom. 11. *as the same Apostle elsewhere, Thou standest*  
 20. *by Faith; be not high minded but fear. We*  
*have heard, that even truly good men may*  
*fall into some errors; and we see by daily*  
*experience, that men of very high Profes-*  
 sions

sions and Attainments have fallen, and do daily fall. Now Pride and Carelessness, will put any of us into the way of falling, and therefore let us not be secure, nor lean to our own understandings, but trust to the strength of the Lord, who alone is able to hold us up. Prov. 3. 5.

2 This should teach us charity toward many seduced persons. There are *Seducers*, and *Seduced*, amongst the Sectaries. The *Seducers* are abominable, and to be prayed against: The *Seduced* are to be pittied and prayed for. Our Church teacheth us very piously and charitably to pray, that God would please to bring into the way of Truth, all such as have erred and are deceived: And also, that he would strengthen such as do stand, and finally beat down Satan under our feet. And this is a prayer which we had need daily and devoutly to put up, seeing even those that are truly gracious, may fall into some Errors. And they are in this danger especially at some times, which leads me to the

III. Part of the Text, viz. The condition which these Christians had formerly been in, which had laid them open to the danger of being seduced, and that is set down in the word, *νήπιοι*, children. When I was a child, saith the Apostle, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: 1 Cor. 13. But when I became a man, I put away childish things. 10.

things. *Pueri mobiles sunt, & sine iudicio, &c.* saith *Mesander* in locum. Children are fickle, and without judgment, and therefore do easily assent to any Doctrine. And *Calvin*, *Pueri sunt, qui nondum gressum firmarunt in viâ Domini, &c.* They are called Children, who have not settled their feet in the way of the Lord: who are not fully resolved which way to take; but fluctuate, inclining now this way, now that way. But those that are settled in Christianity, though they be not arrived to full perfection, yet they have so much constancy as to be settled in the Faith. A Child, you know, will easily be induced to *believe* any thing, upon slight grounds; will presently be *enflamed* with an eager love to any novel vanity; will easily be perswaded to follow a stranger, or to part with any thing it hath, because it knows not the value of it. So those that are *virtuous*, children in Christianity are easily induced to *believe* the fair and specious pretences of seducing spirits; to *delight* in novel Opinions, and modes in Religion; to follow false Teachers, and to *depart* from that *precious Faith*, into which they were Baptized. And as there are three things in Children which makes them prone to mistakes, so also in them that are Children in knowledge.

1. Want of *Consideration*. They do not take the pains to weigh what they hear, but pre-

presently entertain and are fond of it; whereas Elder persons are more staid and deliberate, and have, through use, obtained a faculty to see further into a thing than those that are younger. And while men are Children in Christianity, they are apt rashly and *inconsiderately* to fall out with the Truth, and to *embrace* novelties; whereas due consideration would prevent this.

2. Want of *Experience*. Experience is the Mother of Prudence; for want of this, Children are so easily overseen. And those people that are not versed in the *History* of the Church, to observe the rising and falling of these Errors in former Ages, that have not experience of the *subtilty* and *wickedness* of seducing spirits, may easily be ensnared by their fair pretences.

3. *Self-confidence*. Young persons are prone to conceit themselves to know more than their Elders; and this confidence doth commonly overthrow them, while it withholds them from hearkning to the advice which elder years might administer. And the Apostle tells us, that Novices in the Faith, are very apt to be *pufft up with pride*, <sup>1 Tim. 3. 6.</sup> and thereby to fall into the snare of the Devil.

It will greatly concern us therefore, to take the Apostles Exhortation. Brethren, <sup>1 Cor. 14. 13.</sup> be not children in understanding; In malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men. For to be children in Knowledge, will expose us

to that great mischief, which I am now coming to speak of, in the  
 4 Part. IV. Part of the Text, viz. The prejudice that the Apostle tells them they had been apt to receive, while they were children in the Faith: And this he sets forth by Two very remakable Expressions.

The first is *καυδωνίζουσι*, tossed to and fro, like waves of the Sea. Another Apostle  
 Jude 13. calls the Seducers, *κύματα ἀγρία δαλάνων*, raging Waves of the Sea, both in regard of the boisterousness of their motion, and that trouble and prejudice that they give to those that pass through them. And here this Apostle sets forth the condition of those that are seduced, by this term *καυδωνίζουσι*, tossed to and fro, as a Ship amidst the Waves of the Sea. *Eleganter miseram eorum trepidationem exprimit*, &c. saith Calvin in locum, He very elegantly sets forth the uncertain and wavering condition of seduced people, by this Metaphor of a Ship at Sea, in a tempestuous time: For as such a Ship is tossed by the merciless Wind and Waves, so that neither the counsel nor strength of the Pilot or Marriners can guide it; Even such is the condition of them that are tossed by the winds of strange Doctrine: All the counsel and advice of Friends and Teachers, yea all the strength of good Laws and Government, cannot prevail to steer them in a right course, but the unruly winds of false  
 Doctrin

Doctrin, and false Teachers, like raging waves of the Sea, do hurry them up and down at their pleasures, and to their extreme hazzard, all this while. As a Ship in a tempestuous Sea is in great danger of shipwrack, and it is very doubtful whether ever it will safely arrive at its desired haven; So these seduced persons are in a very great and apparent danger of their souls; though the almighty power of God be able to rescue them as a Lamb out of the mouth of a Lion, yet I say for the present they are in a condition of very great hazzard.

The second word is *περιπεμπόμενοι*, carried about. *Comparat eos vel stipulis, vel aliis rebus infirmis, &c.* saith *Calv. in loc.* As twigs are bended every way with the wind, and chaff and straw, and such like matter that is light and lies loose, are easily driven to and fro with it; Even so persons that are but as weak twigs, will bow and bend to a compliance with every strange Opinion; when strong Trees, that are well rooted in the Faith, will sooner break then bend. Those that lie loose and unsettled, and withal are of a light and less solid temper, are blown up and down like chaff, while those that are weighty and good Corn, lie still in the floor.

How greatly therefore will it concern us all, to endeavour to be *solid* and *setled* in the Faith, that we may be secured in these trouble-

troublesometimes, when there are so many blustering winds of strange Doctrine abroad, to try our stability. And this calls me to the

5 Part.

V. Part of the Text, viz. The *instrument* of this great mistake, which he sets forth in these words, *πύρι ἀνέμω τῆς διδασκαλίας*, the winds of strange Doctrine. New fancied and false Doctrines may fitly be compared to the Wind.

1. As to the *original* of them both. The Arist. 2. Wind is conceived to be an Exhalation arising out of the Caverns of the Earth, Meteor. c. 4. And false Doctrines are *Exhalations* arising out of the *bottomless pit*, sent forth by that infernal *Aeolus*, at the command of an angry *Juno*: Raised, I say, by the Prince of darkness (though in the shape of New Lights); permitted by the wise and just providence of God, whom we have thereunto provoked by our sins.

2. As to the *substance* of them: the Wind is so leight and fluid a body, that it escapes our sight, nor are we well able to tell what it is. Such are false doctrines, though they make a great *noise* and *bustle*, so as to fill the world, as the Wind doth, yet are they indeed (if well looked into) but *vain* and *empty nothings*, contending to appear as something extraordinary to men of common apprehensions.

3. As to the *affects* of them: *Pulchra Meta-*

*Metaphora, dum omnes hominum doctrinas, &c.* saith Calvin in locum, It is an elegant Metaphor, whereby the Apostle compares all the novel Doctrines of men to the Wind; for, as the Wind doth remove things from their places, and tosseth them to and fro; so false doctrines do tend to unsettle us, and remove us from the Faith, whereas the intent of the Word of Truth, is to root men and settle them in the Faith. And hereunto I may add, that as the Wind, though a leight and fluid body, yet hath a very great strength and force in it: so false doctrines, though in themselves lighter then vanity, yet are very powerful to amuse and unsettle mens mindes from their former profession.

4. As to the uncertainty of them: *Adhuc, incertam, dubiam, falsam doctrinam, confert Paulus cum vento, &c.* saith Sarcenius in locum, The Apostle compares false doctrines to the Wind for their uncertainty and doubtfulness. Nothing more variable then the Wind, and nothing more uncertain then they that have once left the Foundation of their first Faith to embrace Novelties. And further, saith he, this expression denotes the imperpetuity, and short continuance of errors. The Truth shall endure for ever, like the Heavens; but Error shall vanish like the Wind, when it hath spent its boysterous blasts, as long as the  
most

most wise God sees fit. False doctrines then, as you have heard, are like the Wind : But these Winds have an *Æolus* that sends them abroad, and manageth them to the mischief of mankind. And this leads us to the

6, Part.

Sixth, and last thing in the Text, viz. the *Authors* or foundation of this great mischief, set forth in these words, τῇ κυβητῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἐν πανουργίᾳ πρὸς τὴν μεθοσίαν τῆς πλάνης, we render it, not improperly, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive. Beza renders it, *In hominum alea, per veteratoriam ad insidiose fallendum versutiam*: which I would thus translate, By the cogging of men, and their pestilent craftiness whereby they endeavour to betray men into the snares of error. Tremellius, out of the Syriack, reads it thus: *Ad omnem ventum doctrinarum versutarum filiorum hominis, qui per astutiam suam sese componunt ut fallant*. By the wind of subtil doctrines of the sons of men, who by their subtilty do compose themselves to deceive others. Our Doctor Hammond, in his Marginal Note, reads it, By the subtilty of men, through their craftiness for the contriving of deceit; which seems to me to come nearest to the sense of the words in the Greek. All these versions concur in the substance; and shew us that there is a great deal of subtilty and cogging, which Seducers do

do make use of in order to the beguiling of ignorant and *unstable* Souls. *Kυβητα* from *κυβητα*, a Dye, may signifie cogging. Some would make this construction of it: *Ut hic per aleam intelligantur incerti illi casus, quibus* Marlorat. *iaculantur homines, &c.* As nothing is more moveable than a Dye, so nothing more uncertain and wavering than the mindes of erroneous persons. But I rather incline to them that say, *Per aleam intelligitur aleatoria quedam vafrities*, Such craft as is used by Gamesters in cogging the Dice. So *Calvin* and *Bullinger* in *locum*. *Alludens ad lusorum quorundam artes, &c.* He alludes to the cogging of Gamesters, whereby they cheat those that play with them. False teachers have an art of cogging with the Holy Scriptures, to make them seem to fall to their own minde, and to maintain their own Opinions, and thereby they easily impose upon those they have to deal withal. For there is such a reverence in the mindes of well-disposed persons, towards the Authority of the Scriptures, as being the Word of the God of Truth, that they are presently induced to receive with a great deal of respect and zeal, whatsoever appears to them to be grounded upon the Word of God. And therefore it is that Seducers do take this course, as that which they have alwayes by experience found to be very effectual.

Yea

Yea further, saith Calvin, *Huc accedit, quod ad fruendas insidias excubant.* They are said to lye in wait to deceive. Which notes the vigilance and unwearied diligence that false teachers use, to catch poor Souls into snares. They humble themselves, and stoop, and creep, and comply, to intise men into their snares, even as *Vitellius* in the Historiā, who is said, *proicere oscula, &c. & quicquam facere pro Imperio*, that he would prostitute his Salutations, and Embraces to gain mens hearts to own him as Emperour: Or as *Absalom*, who hugged the people and kissed them, and gave them good words when they came to him; complaining of the King his Father, and promising them great matters when he should come to the Kingdom, and by these arts he stole away the hearts of the men of Israel. Even so these Seducers do humble themselves, and give fair words to those that follow them: they complain of great disorders in the Church of England, and promise them strange things, if they will but come over to their Sect or Party: and by such arts they lay in wait to steal away the hearts of simple people. Yea, they spare no pains, but, as our Saviour saith of the Pharisees, *They compass Sea and Land, to gain one Profelyte* to their opinions.

Now as this shews the inveterate malice, and subtilty of that old Serpent, who hath been

been so long versed in the accursed art of subverting mens Souls : So it should teach us *cautionness*, that we endeavour to equal the vigilancy of our enemies that lye in wait to deceive, by being as vigilant to prevent their deceits. *Quæ omnia excitare & acñere studium nostrum debent, &c.* saith Calvin upon this occasion. All this should stir up and whet our industry and watchfulness, lest by neglecting to study the Word of God, and to stand fast in the Truths thereof, we be circumvented by our enemies, and suffer the sad punishment of our sloth and security.

And whereas one great help against stratagems is a *suspicious* minde, and diligent inquiring where and how they are laid, (for such designs, when *discovered*, are in a fair way to be *disappointed* :) It may therefore be a great help to us against the subtilty of these men that lie in wait to deceive us, not to be over-credulous, or prone to believe every man that comes unto us with fair pretences. Beloved, believe not every spirit, nor every one that pretends to the spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God, because 'tis too evident that there are many false Prophets gone out into the world. And that we may the better be acquainted with their subtilties and deceits : I shall lay before you some characters that will shew men not to be sent from God, whatsoever they pretend, but that

that they lie in wait merely to deceive us: That so on whomsoever we see these Marks, we may know them so as to avoid them, and their delusions.

1. Those that apply themselves rather to persuade the Affections, then to convince the Judgement. The Understanding was by God appointed to be the leader of the other faculties of the soul: whereas we ordinarily say, that *Love is blind*, and the same we may say of *Hatred*, and all the rest of the Affections; and consequently the Understanding ought first to be informed of the goodness or evil of any thing, before the Affections be set on, either to love or abhor it. And therefore we may well conclude, that they who attempt to win mens affections by persuasions, before they have convinced the judgment by weighty and cogent reasons, doe take a very indirect course, to come in at the window and not at the door of the soul: And that either they are blind leaders of these blind affections; or else that, having more knowledge then honesty themselves, their designe is to impose upon the simple honesty of well-meaning people. A way of popular oratory, mixed with plausible and earnest exclamations, and patheticall obtestations, is indeed very apt to prevail with men of lively affections; and dull understandings: But they that take such courses, may be suspected as those that intend

to draw men into their net by *low-belling*.

2. If men wholly *decry* the judgment of *Reason* in matters of Religion, they afford us very strong grounds to suspect them. It is true, that many points of our Faith are so high, that they *transcend* the reach of *Reason*; onely we can see it reasonable to receive those points, upon the authority of the God of Truth, though our understandings come short of fathoming the *depth* of them: But we may speak it for the honour of our Christian Religion, that it presents nothing to our Faith to be received, which is *contrary* to the principles of well-improved *Reason*. And therefore those that have the face to tell us, that we must receive things from them, and from I know not what *light within*; and, if reason contradict it, we must lay it aside as an humane and carnal business; yea, if a plain and rational interpretation of Scripture oppose them, we must reject that also as *the Letter*, and not *the Spirit*: What is this, but in plain terms to tell us, that they come on purpose to *blindfold* us, that they may lead us whither they list, and that it is but fit we should subject our eyes to that cover they offer to put upon them.

3. If men pretend to be *infallible*, and make it their common course in cool blood

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(if ever they be fo) to brazen it out, and make the world to believe, that whofoever opposeth them, muft needs be in an *error*, they give us juft occafion to fufpect their *defigne*. We have a great deal of talk in the world concerning Antichrift, and what a dangerous Body he is: and as to the perfon or people that deferve this name, we may fay as Chrift did of the true Chrift, they fhall fay, *loe here is Chrift, and loe there*; many fay, lo this is Antichrift, and others cry, loe that is Antichrift, till the vaineft fort of them have come to that pafs as to believe whatfoever is contrary to their own Way and Sect, to be *Antichriftian*. Now, if we condemn this as one of the moft unreafonable and dangerous Tenets that are professed by the *Roman Antichrift*; then why fhould we not reckon them to be of Antichriftian fpirits, that will not believe that it is poffible they fhould be deceived?

4. If men will *ufurp* the office of publick Teachers, and will not fubmit themfelves to an orderly tryal by them that have judgment and authority to take an account of them, they give us juft ground to fufpect them as *deceivers*, inftead of *instructors* of the ignorant. The Apoftle tells us, that  
 1 Cor. 14. the fpirits of the Prophets, are fubject to the  
 32. Prophets. And that the publick Teachers  
 1 Tim. 3. fhould *first be proved* before they be admitted  
 1 Jo. to take upon them to teach. And there-  
 fore

fore as this surly Tenet of refusing to be subject to the trial and approbation of others, doth at the first view, discover it self to be the product of pride and height of stomach; so it is a signe, that these persons have a designe to put off very bad wares to the people, seeing they will not suffer them to be brought to the light to be examined.

5. Those that spend more time and diligence in pressing men to embrace their Tenets and opinions, then in exhorting them to the duties of holiness towards God, and righteousness towards men, are very suspicious in their proceedings. As Christ bids all of us, to *Seek first his Kingdom, and the righteousness thereof*; so every profitable Teacher should make it his first and chiefest design to perswade men to become Subjects of this Kingdom, and to lead lives answerable to their profession. And therefore those that spend their pains chiefly in teaching men to renounce their Teachers, and to separate themselves from the society of the Church, to follow their new-fangle ways, give us just ground to suspect that they desire to baptize men into their own name; that they are self-seekers, such as are setting up for themselves to establish a *Self* of their own: and that they have rather a design to draw men to themselves then to God, preferring their own credit, or something else that is worse, before the glory of God.

Q 2

6. Those

Mat. 6.

33.

1 Cor. 2.

15.

6. Those that spend more Zeal in crying out against *indifferent* things, then in re-proving apparent *ungodliness*, may justly be suspected by us: *Thou that abhorrest Idols* (saith the *Apostle*) *dost thou commit Sacriledge*? It is true, that in respect of the Authority of him that commands, there is no small commandment, and the breach of any of Gods Laws is a great sin: But yet in respect of the nature of the Command, Christ sometimes speaks of a *first and great Commandment*, and sometimes of *one of the least Commandments*: and he that is scrupulous in *smaller* matters, and careless in *greater*, doth betray himself to have a diseased Conscience, as I have elsewhere shewed. And therefore those that Cry out with such a loud and bitter cry, against things which, in the judgement of the soberest of themselves, are in their own Nature *indifferent*, as if they were palpable *Idolatry*; and yet have made no bones of *sacriledge*, *injustice*, and *shedding of innocent blood*, it is a shrewd sign that they are Seducers, and have a design to impose upon us.

Rom. 2.  
22.

Mat. 22.  
38.

Mat. 5.  
19.

Sermon on  
Acts 26.  
9.

7. Those that *contradict* the sense of the Church of God in all ages, are to be suspected as *Innovators*, and that their opinions are rather *new* than *good*. It is true that the antiquity of an error doth not excuse it, for there have been errors in the Church, ever since the time of the *Apostles*:

Apostles : But yet the constant judgement of the Church of God in all Ages, concerning any point in *controverſie*, or concerning the meaning of any controverted *Scripture*, gives us good encouragement to believe it, and to disbelieve them that oppose it ; because it is not probable that our gracious God would leave his Church in the dark, through so many ages, and never discover the Truth till now of late.

8. Lastly, we may know them from the *direction* that God himself gives us, *Deut.* 18. ult. *When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass ; that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken it presumptuously : thou shalt not be afraid of him.* Those that pretend to a gift of prophecy, as many have done in our age ( though they should by often shooting at random, hit the Mark sometimes, yet ) if they miss in anything that they foretel ( as we have seen it in our frequent experience ) this is a sure sign, that the Lord hath not sent them, but they speak of their own heads : and we have reason to fear, that they have not onely belyed the Lord, in saying, *Thus saith the Lord*, when the Lord hath not spoken, but also that they have had a further design, even to entice us to the

*Jer. 23: 31.*

embracing of their errors by these pre-  
sences.

Upon whomsoever we see any of these  
Marks, we have reason to suspect them to be  
of those *that lye in wait to deceive*: and  
therefore should avoid them, and take *Solo-*  
*mons* counsel, to *Cease*, or forbear, to bear the  
Prov. 19. instruction that tends to cause us to err from the  
27. ways of *Wisdom*.

To conclude, I shall give you a recapitu-  
lation of what hath been spoken, a little va-  
rying from my former Method. You have  
heard (1.) That there are many *Winds* of  
false doctrine stirring, to try who are sta-  
ble. (2.) That Seducers use a great  
deal of *subtilty* and *diligence*, lying in wait  
to deceive. (3.) That a great number are  
by them *tossed to and fro, and carried about*.  
(4.) That even those that are of *honest af-*  
*fections* and *good lives*, are in danger of being  
ensnared by them; and therefore *he that*  
*thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he*  
*fall*. (5.) That especially those that are  
*children*, and weak in knowledge, are in  
great danger, and consequently that we  
should labour to be men and not *children in*  
*understanding*. (6.) Lastly, that God hath ap-  
pointed the Office of the *Ministry*, in the  
Church, as a special preservation from er-  
rours.

Now the Lord, of his Mercy, grant to  
Joh. 3. all of us Grace and Wisdom to *search the*  
29. *Scri-*

Scriptures, and to try the spirits whether they <sup>1</sup>Joh. 4.  
 be of God: and to hold fast the Faith and a <sup>1</sup>.  
 good Conscience, now when so many have made <sup>1</sup> Tim. 1.  
 shipwrack of both: that so we may not be <sup>19</sup>.  
 drawn away with the error of the wicked to <sup>2</sup> Pet. 3.  
 depart from our own stedfastness; but may grow <sup>17, 18</sup>.  
 in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Je-  
 sus Christ. Grant this, O Lord, (we be-  
 seech thee) through the Merits of thy dear  
 Son, and the working of thy Holy Spirit.

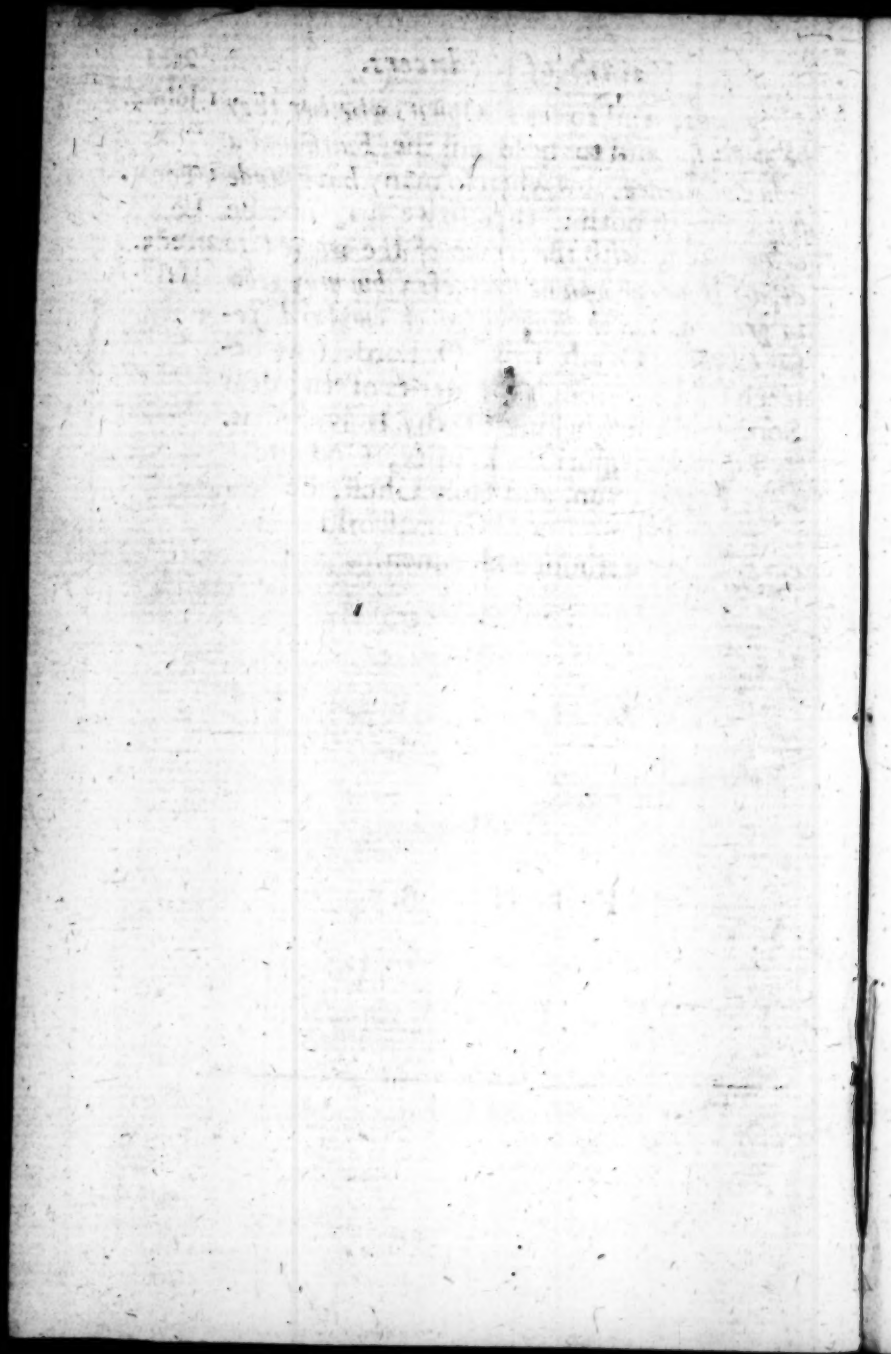
To which glorious Trinity, God the  
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be  
 all Honour and Glory, world  
 without end. Amen.

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F I N I S.

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Ἡ Ζυγὴ Σοφίας  
O R,  
HEAVENLY WISDOM  
described by its seven

Properties.

An ASSIZE  
S E R M O N

Preached in the  
CATHEDRAL at S A R U M,

July 9th. 1665. at the  
Wiltshire = Assizes.

Before the Right Honourable his Majesties  
Judges of Assize, and *Nisi Prius*, for  
the W E S T E R N Circuit.

In the Sherifffalty, and at the request, of  
T H O M A S M O M P E S S O N Esquire.

---

By Paul Lathom, M. A.

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*Pro. 4. 7. Wisdom is the principal thing : there-  
fore get Wisdom, and with all thy getting, get  
Understanding.*

---

Printed by T. M. 1666.

HEAVENLY WISDOM

described in two

# Properties.

An ASSIST

## SERMON

Preached in the

CATHEDRAL of S. ANDREW

on the 10th of June

1844

By the Right Honourable the Master of the Rolls, and Judge of the High Court of Chancery, in the WESTERN Circuit.

In the Spectator, and at the request of  
THOMAS MORTIMER

By Paul Lambour, M.A.

From the press of the printer, and with the printer's  
understanding.

Printed by T. M. 1844



Ἡ ἀνωθεν Σοφία :

OR,

Heavenly WISDOM described

By its Seven

PROPERTIES.

James 3. 17.

*But the Wisdom that is from above,  
is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,  
easie to be entreated, full of Mercy  
and good Fruits, without partiali-  
ty, and without hypocrisie.*



Wisdom is the soul of  
Nature, the eye of  
the Soul, the light  
of the Eye, the sun  
of that Light : the  
copy of Heaven,  
the standard of the  
Earth ; the helm of  
Reason, the guardi-  
an of Life, the glory of Men, the mirror of  
of

of Angels, the shadow or reflection of God himself, who is, as the Psalmist speaks, *כְּשֶׁלֶמֶת אֹר כְּעֵט* covered with Light as with a Garment. It is Wisdom that makes a man Denizon of the upper, Regent of the lower World, correspondent of both; Without which, we should be but clods of moving Earth, steeped to dirt in Phlegm, and kneaded into humane shape.

Psal. 104.  
2.

This general term, *Wisdom*, divides it self (*ut analogum in sua analogata*) into worldly Policy, moral Prudence, and Christian Wisdom. Worldly Policy trades in the World as its City, from whence it seems to take its name. Now all that is in the world, is ei-

1 Joh. 2. ther *ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς* or *ἐπιθυμία τοῦ*  
18. *σαρκῶν*, or else *πλεονεξία τῆ βίου* Pleasures, Profits, or Honours. That which de-

Jam. 3. signs riches as its end, our Apostle calls  
15. *ἐπιγῆιος* earthly; that which designs plea-

sures, he calls *ῥυπαρὴ*, sensual; that which designs honour, he stiles *σατανικῶς*, De-

vilish, because it imitates that great sin of the Devil, Pride. And of all worldly wisdom in general, St. Paul pronounceth, that

1 Cor. 3.  
19.

it is *μωρία παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ* foolishness before God. Moral Prudence, whether we take it for a practical Virtue, or for an intellectual Habit, is so excellent and useful a thing, that we may truly say of it, that Without prudence, neither the mind nor actions can be good.

Prov. 19.  
2.

Christi-

Christian Wisdom, which our Apostle in the Text calls, *ἡ ἀνωθεν σοφία*, the Wisdom which is from above, hath many that are pretenders to it; but few, that are candidates of it: And as concerning the excellency and value of this Wisdom, we may say with *Job*, *Job 28.*

לא יתן סנור תחתיה ולא ישקל כסף מחירה *15.*  
*It cannot be gotten for Gold, neither shall Silver be weighed for the price of it: So by reason of the boldness of those that pretend to Wisdom, we may take up that which he saith before (Vehachachmah meaijn timarze, vers. 13. veeh zeh mequom binah,) Where shall Wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding? Many men lay such confident claims to Wisdom, that it is very difficult to judge on whose side the Verdict will pass.*

Such were the *Gnosticks* of old (a Sect very rise and pernicious in the beginning of the Christian Church) against whom to fortifie those to whom he writes, seems to be the chief designe of the Apostle in this Epistle. And more particularly at *vers. 13.* of this Chapter, he calls them to a tryal of their title to Wisdom, *τις σοφός ἐστις ὑμεῖς ἐν ὑμῖν; who is the wise man amongst you? Or, Who are they that are the great pretenders to Wisdom? Let them come and shew their wisdom, by the fruits of it: Let them shew out of a good Conversation their fruits with meekness and wisdom. But, saith he, I fear there are to be found, especially among*

- among you *Gnosicks*, those fruits that never grew upon the Tree of saving Knowledge :
- vers.14. For, *ἡ ζήλον πικρὸν ἔχει καὶ ἐριδιαν*, If ye have bitter envying and strife among you, it is but vain glory, and lying against the Truth, to term your selves such men of knowledge : For envy and strife, are not the fruits of Heavenly Knowledge, but of that worldly
- vers.15. Wisdom, which is earthly, sensual, devilish ; and is the cause of confusion (tumult or unquietness) *ἀκαταστάσις*, and in a word, of every evil work. Whereas, *ἡ ἀνωθεν σοφία*, the Wisdom that is from above is of another nature, and brings forth other manner of fruits, in the words I have before read unto you. But the Wisdom which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated ; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisie.
- vers.16.

- In which words (Chachmoth baanetha bethah, charzebah hammudehaa (shibbah)
- Prov.9. Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath bewen
1. out her seven Pillars. The Palace of Wisdom, is, like that of the Sun,

— *sublimibus alta columnis*,

very lofty and magnificent ; it is *ἀνωθεν*, from above. If any ask, Where shall true Wisdom be found ? And, where is the place of Understanding ? Behold here is her House. And these are the seven Pillars upon which it is built. *Πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνὴ*, It is first pure, or holy.

holy. *ἁγία ἐραυική*, it is secondly peaceable. Thirdly, *ἐπεική*, gentle. Fourthly, *ῥαυή*, easie to be perswaded, or of an obedient temper. Fifthly, *μετ' ἐλέους καὶ κάρων ἀγαθῶν*, full of mercy and good fruits. Sixthly, *ἀδιακρίτῳ*, without partiality, or without wrangling, or disputing, as the Margent hath it; or, as some render it, without wavering. Seventhly, *ἀνυπόκριτος*, without hypocrisie.

While I survey this Palace of Wisdom, and take a view of the Pillars upon which it is built, I am bold to beg your serious and candid attention.

The name of *Wisdom* sounds so laudably, that there is hardly any man so far from Wisdom, but he is a pretender to it: Most men contend either to know more, or at least to be thought to know more, then their Neighbours. In a word, all men are *Gnosticks*, they have perswaded themselves, and are very earnest in perswading the world that they are a knowing people; that, *no doubt, themselves are the people, and that Wisdom shall die with them.* The Suit hath been so long depending, that it is high time it were brought to an Issue; and that the Evidences were impartially examined, which each man hath to shew for himself. And, as in most controversies, if men could be perswaded to lay aside passion and prejudice, they might easily be judges of their own cause:

Job. 12.  
2.

cause: so in this great Contest, who are the wisest men, and take the best course, if men would lay aside passion and prejudice, they might themselves easily judge from this Text, who they are that have met with true Wisdom.

Wisdoms  
House.

He that desires to find any person, must ordinarily go to his house to seek for him. Now the house of Wisdom is *ἀνωθεν*, from above: it is like the heavenly Jerusalem,

Apoc. 21. which St. John saw *καταβαίνουσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*, coming down from God out of Heaven.

Prov. 2. 6. For, The Lord giveth Wisdom, and out of his mouth proceedeth Knowledge and Understanding. And the Wisdom that he gives, prompts a man to look upward for his joy and portion; and to look up unto God, and acknowledge Him the Authour and Giver of that Wisdom which he hath. Here then is the Palace where Wisdom dwells.

Psal. 48.  
12.

But, Let us walk about this Sion, and go round about her, and tell the Pillars thereof, that we may see whether we have the counter-part of this Fabrick erected in our souls, and consequently, whether true Wisdom hath entred into our hearts or no.

7 Pillar.

The first Pillar of the House of Wisdom is Purity. *Πρώτον μὲν ἀγνὴν*, it is first pure or chaste, free from those impure lusts, with which the Gnosticks were defiled, though pre-

pretending to an higher measure of know-  
 ledge than other men were Masters of. To  
 man God said, Behold (jirath adonai hi  
 chachmah) the fear of the Lord, that is Wis- Job 28.  
 dom; (vesur merang binah) and to depart from ult.  
 evil, that is Understanding. And (refhith  
 chachmah jirath Jehovah) the fear of the Pal. 111.  
 Lord is the beginning, the very foundation, of ult.  
 Wisdom: and who are they that are to be  
 accounted men of a good understanding?  
 but (col hahosiem) all they, and onely they,  
 that keep his Commandments, and lead their  
 lives according to the directions of his  
 Word; they onely are men of Wisdom.  
 St. Gregory Nazianzene saith very divinely; Greg.  
 The first and chiefeft Wisdom is a good and Naz. O-  
 laudable life; purified, and in some measure Gal. 10.  
 answerable to the purity that is in the most  
 Holy God; who accepts of purity alone in  
 stead of, and before all other sacrifices:  
 Which (saith he) the Scripture calleth a  
 contrite heart, a sacrifice of praise, the new  
 creature in Christ, the new man; and such  
 like names. And elsewhere the same Fa-  
 ther speaking to Hero the Philosopher, saith, Orat. 23.  
 This is the true Wisdom and the true No- ro Hero  
 bility, that makes us truly honourable and the Philo-  
 praise-worthy; which hath the seal of pu- sopher.  
 rity and good manners upon it; which en-  
 deavoureth to carry us up to God the  
 chiefeft good, and thereby sheweth a true  
 nobility of Spirit.

R

Purity

Purity must needs be the fruit, or property of *Heavenly Wisdom*.

- First, because the ways of Holiness are the safest and best course which a man can take even in respect of *this life*. 1 *Wisdom* dwell with Prudence: Now Prudence looks round about in what it doth: And he that looks well about him, cannot but by Faith see him that is invisible to the bodily eyes: that the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the Evil and the Good. Now that which the light of Nature sheweth us of the omnipresence and omniscience of him that is an infinite and immensis Being, and who daily upholdeth and ordereth all things in the VWorld, by the Word of his Power; did prompt even Seneca the Moralist to give this good counsel: *Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in conspectu vivamus; sic cogitandum, tanquam aliquis in pectus intimum inspicere possit: & potest quidem. Quid enim prodest, hominibus aliquid esse secretum? nihil Deo clusum est.* It is the best course always to live so as remembering that we have eyes upon us; yea, so to order our very Thoughts, as if they were seen: and so they are. For, though men cannot, yet, God doth see them, from whom nothing is hid. And if natural Reason did prompt men to take heed to their ways, how much more should Religion teach us this lesson? This restrained Joseph from embracing impure and

un-

unlawful pleasures, when he had the most inviting opportunity to tempt him to them. *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* And from cruelty and injustice, when he had both might and Authority to bear him out in it. *This do and live, for I fear God.* Gen. 39. 9. Gen. 42. 18.

And we may add hereunto, that as there is no greater torment than that which proceeds from consciousness of an evil life, and dishonest heart: so there is no greater comfort on this side Heaven, than the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in this world: So that, even as to this life, a pure and holy conversation is most prudent and agreeable to the dictates of Wisdom.

Secondly, it is much the safest with respect to the life to come. *The wise man's eyes are in his head,* he sees things at a distance as well as those that are near at hand: And the Wisdom that is from above will tell us, that we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of those things which we have done in the body, and to receive a reward according to them, whether they be good or evil. And that he that hath sown to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, whereas he that hath sown to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And therefore true Wisdom cannot but account it a

Rom. 6.  
22.

mans best and most prudential course to bear fruits of holiness here, that at last it may have the end, even life everlasting.

If we reflect upon this first property of Wisdom, we shall easily be prompted to infer,

1. That if the Wisdom that is from above be *ἡ ἀρχαία σοφία*, if it be the first property of Wisdom, to be pure, then they stand convicted of palpable and extream folly, that are of impure and wicked hearts and lives. The Integrity of *Cato*, the Justice of *Aristides*, and other eminent Virtues in many of the Heathens, were very remarkable to the shame of too many that are called Christians, as *St. Augustine* saith, *Quam multos Philosophorum & audivimus & legimus, &c.* How many of the Philosophers have we heard of, and read of, and seen, to be chaste and patient, modest and liberal, abstinent and bountiful, despisers of the honours and delights of the world, and lovers of Justice as well as Knowledge? And if these men without the knowledge of the Scriptures did these things, how shall those Christians be condemned, who are better taught, but do not practise so well? And *St. Chrysostom*, *Hom. 18. Quæ non tormenta patiemur, &c.* What torments shall not those Christians undergo, who being commanded to excel the Scribes and Pharisees in righteousness, do yet come short of the Heathens? How, I pray you, shall

August.

Ep. 142.

Chrysol.

Hom. 18.

in cap. 5.

Mat.

shall such men see the Kingdom of God ?  
Yea, the very *Satyrist* may shame the in-  
justice and lewdness of many Christians,  
who tells us, that this is the best and most  
acceptable Sacrifice to the Gods,

*Compositum jus fasque animo, sanctique re-* *Perfius*  
*cessus* *Sat. 2.*

*Mentis, & incoctum generoso pectus honesto.*

A just and honest heart, and a life that is an-  
swerable, is so acceptable to the gods, that,  
as he there addeth,

*Hec cedo ut admoveam superis, & farre*  
*litabo.*

The meanest oblation, even a poor Barley-  
cake offered by such an one, shall sooner be  
accepted then thousands of Rams, and ten *Prov. 15.*  
thousands of Rivers of Oyl from the wicked 8.  
whose Sacrifice is an abomination before the  
Lord.

2. This argues that they are but superfi-  
cially wise, that onely talk of purity, but do  
not practise it. Who talk as if they had  
partook of the cloven tongues, but walk as  
if they were supported with cloven feet.

*Qui Curios simulant & Bacchanalia vivunt.* *Juven.*  
*Sat. 2.*

Who speak like Saints, but live like sinners.

R 3

Et

— Et de virtute locuti  
Clunem agitant. —

Mat. 23. 4 That read hard Lectures of Piety and strictness to others, and *bind heavy burdens* to lay upon other mens shoulders, *but themselves will not touch them with one of their fingers.*

3. This convinceth them of the highest folly, that make knowledge and pretence of Piety, an encouragement to impurity and dishonesty: as if that were lawful for them which is unlawful for others: or as if they had gotten so far into favour with God Almighty, that he had given them an Indulgence to do what they list. St. *Augustine* tells us, that the *Stoicks* who place felicity in virtue, to shame such as approved virtue, but applyed all to bodily delight, did use to delineate a Picture wherein *Pleasure* sitteth on a Throne as a delicate Queen, and all the *Virtues* stand about her to serve her: *Prudence* must contrive a way whereby *Pleasure* may reign in safety: *Fortitude* must defend the body from fear or feeling of sufferings, and each of the other *Virtues* must employ it self for the service of *Lady Pleasure*. And as the Father saith, *Nil vilis, &c.* Than such a Picture nothing can be more vile and deformed. And such are they, who place pleasure and profit in the throne

throne of their hearts, and set Religion as the Hand-maid to wait on it, and either to cloak all its projects, or else excuse them. Than this, nothing can be more odious, and nothing more contrary to true Wisdom. For these, while they pretend to the building of the House of Wisdom, do take away the first and main Pillar, *Purity*. From the viewing of which, let us now move forward to the

Second Pillar in this Building, viz. *Peace-2. Pillar.*  
*ableness.* *Ἐπειτα εἰρηνικὴ*, it is next peaceable. St. Paul placeth Peace before holiness: *Follow peace with all men, and holiness* Heb. 12.  
*without which no man shall see God.* This A- 14.  
 postle inverteth the Order, and placeth first *Purity*, and next *Peaceableness* as Pillars in the House of Wisdom: whence we may note, how the Spirit of God doth inter-twist Holiness and Peace, and Peace and Holiness, making them inseparable in a Christian; to the great shame of them, who set up the one to the overthrowing of the other. St. Gregory Nazianzene, to set forth Greg. Naz. 3  
 the excellency of Peace, sheweth how all Orat. 15.  
 things in Nature conspire to agree, which tends to their mutual preservation; whereas discord tends to ruine. And elsewhere, Orat. 22.  
 in exhorting to modesty in disputations, he saith that, Nothing is more beautiful and profitable than Peace, and nothing more odious and troublesome than discord. And

Greg. Naz. De Fide. in his *Traité de Fide*, he saith, that Nothing is more precious then Peace. That God who made us, is called *the God of Peace*. Phil. 4.9. Christ that redeemed us, is called *the Prince of Peace*. The Holy Ghost that sanctifieth us, descended *in the shape of a Dove*, as an emblem of Peace. Our Saviour when he ascended on high, *left Peace* as his last Legacy to his people: His Apostles do frequently exhort us to peace; to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace; to study to be quiet; and if it be possible, as far as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men. All which is sufficient to convince us, that they that would deserve the reputation of Wisdom, must by all means approve themselves of the number of *those that are quiet and peaceable in the land*.  
 Joh. 14. 27.  
 Eph. 4.3.  
 2 Thes. 4. 11.  
 Rom. 12. 18.  
 2 Sam. 22. 19.

What then shall we say to those boisterous Nimrods, those sons of Thunder and Whirl-wind, that can never endure to see Janus's Temple shut? Certainly, though they be endued with a large portion of that policy, which is Earthly and Devilish, they have but little of this Wisdom that is from above. Indeed peace is so valuable, or rather unvaluable a Jewel, that it is a wonder that any man should be so brutishly unreasonable as to cast it away; except he was either born in *perniciem humani generis*, begotten and born in spight to the world; or else doth hope to fish to his best advantage when

when the waters are troubled. The *Histo-* Tacitus,  
rian faith of *Agrippina, Dare filio Imperium* Annal.  
*potuit, tolerare Imperantem non potuit*: She l. 12.  
was desirous to set her son in the Throne,  
but could not endure his Government, when  
he was made Emperor: And such is the per-  
verseness of many peoples spirits, that they  
could rather be willing to believe them-  
selves to have set up or *restored* a Prince,  
then to *obey* him when he is set up.

Nor will men of troublesome spirits and  
plausible tongues, want for specious pre-  
ferences to colour their detestable practises.  
Sometimes they pretend great faults in  
those that are *instruments* in Government:  
just like those of whom *Tiberius* in Tacitus Annal. l. 3  
*speaks, Nonnulli accusare tantum vitia vo-*  
*lunt: deinde cum gloriam ejus rei adepti sunt,*  
*simultates faciunt*: Many men seek for ap-  
plause in the world, not by amending their  
own lives, but by crying out against the  
faults of others: and when they have got-  
ten this applause, they make use of it to  
raise Sedition. And certainly, this way of  
accusing others, is very apt to take much  
with the common people; as the same ju-  
dicious *Historian* observes. *Ambitionem scrip-* Tacitus,  
*toris facile adverseris, &c.* Men are natu- Hist. l. 1.  
rally prone to nauseate him that is too prodig-  
al in commending another, but a detra-  
ctor is eagerly heard; because, the paneg-  
yrick smells of self-ends, but he that speaks  
evil

evil of another, seems to incautious people to have a better design.

Hist l. 9.

Tacitus  
Annal.  
l. 16.

Sometimes, again we shall hear them pretend I know not what *liberty*, as if the want of that were the occasion of their discontent: And as *Tacitus* saith, *Libertas & speciosa nomina pretexuntur*, &c. Liberty and such like words, are but specious pretences; nor did ever any man attempt to enslave others, but that he pretended liberty. And it hath been too truly observed of such persons, what *Tigellinus* in the *Historian* speaks falsely of others, *Ut imperium evertant libertatem præferunt: postquam everterint, ipsam invisuri*. Those that have pretended the liberty of *Parliament* and *People*, to the reproaching and overthrowing a well settled Monarchy; as soon as they had done that, have been the greatest *invaders* of those liberties which they pleaded for.

Tacitus  
Annal.  
l. 3.

Sometimes they plead for a *Reformation* in matters of Religion, which if it were carried on as far as the shoulders of these great talkers would be able to bear it, yet would it not give satisfaction even to themselves: But as *Tiberius* speaks about the *Sumptuary Laws*, *In conviviiis & circulis incusari ista, & modum posci*, &c. It is ealie for men in their meetings and tipling-bouts, to find fault with this and that, and the other thing, and to wish for a *Reformation* of them, and to condemn their Governours

ours because it is not done; whereas if these things were done, at least some of these persons would be the first to find themselves agrieved therewith. Which argues, that these large talks do not proceed from a true zeal after a reformation of what is amiss, but from an itching humour after novelties and disturbances. For, as the Historian observeth of the estate of Rome at some times, *Periculosa severitas, flagitiosa largitio, seu omnia militi seu nihil concesseris, in ancipiti republicâ*, Whether a Prince grant none or mens desires, or grant all, they are still of the same temper: and oft times the gratifying of them in some needless things, doth but encrease their thirst, and make them bolder to ask, and more hard to be satisfied.

Tacitus  
Annal.  
l. 1.

Thus, I say, unquiet spirits will never want pretences to colour their turbulency: But these are meer pretences. What then shall we say of these men? Shall we say with David, Scatter O Lord, the people that delight in war? Or wish them with Cyrus, to be once glutted with blood, who delight in blood? No, far be it from us, to have a zeal as hot as fire; to call for fire from Heaven, even upon those that would gladly set us all in a flame. We rather wish they may shew themselves such men of wisdom as they pretend to be: and may learn to shew forth that wisdom which is from above, which

which is not onely pure, but peaceable also.  
From hence let us proceed,

3 Pillar. Thirdly, to view the next Pillar in this Palace, and that is *Peaceableness*. This Wisdom is *ἐπιεικής* gentle: *ἐπιεικσία* (saith a

Dr. Ham.  
in lo-  
cum.

Learned and judicious *Annotator*) is the ordinary word of the *Philosophers*, and taken from them by the *Lawyers*, to signifie the mitigation of exact and strict *Justice*, when the execution of it is not so agreeable to the Rules of *Charity*. And so it notes in general the fit and proper temper that is to be observed in all things. *Hesychius* saith, *ἐπιεικής* is τὸ καθήκον, πρέπον, προσήκον, ἱκανόν, that which is fit, decent, or due. This general word is several wayes applied in diverse places of Scripture. In this Text, the word *peaceable* that goes before it, and other words of the same Nature attending it, advise us to construe it, *a readiness to recede from our own strict right in order to Peace*. In this

2 Tim. 1.  
24.

Tit. 3. 2.

sense the Apostle exhorts Ministers especially to be gentle. And all men also to labour after this frame of Spirit. In which places he opposeth gentleness to a contentious strictness, in standing upon our own Right to the prejudice of Peace. And indeed, Peace being so excellent a Jewel, as I have before shewed; Wisdom, but especially that which is from above, will perswade a man to part with much, to purchase this *pearl of price*. Beside, that God who is infinite

finite in Wisdom, is said to be gentle: (חַנּוּכָּה *chanva- thekah carbeni*) Thy gentleness hath made me great. *Psal. 18. 39.* Christ who is the Wisdom of the Father, is gentle: I exhort you *διὰ τῆς ἐπι- 2Cor. 10.* *χέρας τῷ Χριστῷ*, by the gentleness of Christ. The Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of Wisdom, is gentle: for gentleness is reckoned among the fruits of this Spirit. *Gal. 5. 22.*

How far then are they from this Wisdom which is from above; who (with the Spanish begger) will not alter one step of their gravity for all the lashes of the Law, for all the entreaties of friends, nor for the preservation of publick peace? Yea, who had rather see Heaven and Earth blended together, then to abate any thing of their own humours. Certainly, if this Wisdom be not *σαυωσις*, yet it looks very like it: and represents men as much resembling that sort of persons, whom the Apostle describes to be *τολμῆται* and *ἠυδαῖδες*, presumptuous and self-willed. This is none of the Fruits of the Wisdom that is from above. And indeed, there are so few endued with this Virtue of gentleness, that we may leave this, with a lamentation, and proceed to the

Fourth Pillar in the House of Wisdom, *4th. Pill.* viz. *Easiness to be entreated*: it is *ἡπιότης* *lar.* Which word may either signifie an easiness to believe any good of another, or that may mitigate his fault; and so our Doctor Ham-  
mond

mond paraphraeth it: and thus it casts a frowning eye upon those that are very prone to evil, surmises, malignant interpretations of other mens actions and intentions, to calumniating and backbiting their Brethren: and who δόξας ἢ τρήμυσι βλασφημῶντες, are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, at least in their secret discourses. A sin which, as it is very common, so is it very contrary to the nature of that Charity, which, as the Apostle 2 Pet. 2. 10. tells us, doth not rejoyce in iniquity, in evil and false reports of others, but believeth all things and hopeth the best; and consequently it is contrary to the nature of Heavenly Wisdom. 1 Cor. 13. 6, 7.

But Beza renders this word, *Obtemperans*; and Tremellius out of the Syriack version, *Obsequens*. It is the property of the Wisdom that is from above, to be obedient to Government. How great care God hath taken to preserve the Authority of the Magistrates, is evident by his investing them with the title of *Father and Mother*, in the fifth Commandment. Yea, he calls them Psal. 82. 6 (Elohim) gods: and joyns the fear of the Lord and the King together: (jirah eth Jehovah ve hammelech) fear thou the Lord and the King. Nor hath he in the New Testament been more remiss in exhorting to obedience, even when they were subject to the worst of men for their Governours: but exhorts us to be obedient, not onely διὰ τὴν ἔσπεραν, for fear of wrath and punishment, but

but chiefly, *διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν*, for Conscience sake, and in obedience to Gods Command-  
ment. So strange is it, that any man can pretend Conscience as an encouragement to disobedience. And St. Peter exhorts us to be obedient to every ordinance of man, *διὰ τὰς κύριον*, for the Lords sake: Strange then it is that any can pretend obedience to God, as opposite to their Allegiance to Caesar.

Rom. 13.

5.

1 Pet. 2.

13.

Piety, is defined by Cicero, to be *Iustitia* Cicero de  
*erga Deos*: And St. Augustine explains it, *It* Na. Deor.  
*is Verus cultus veni Dei*, the right way of worshipping the true God. *Ludovicus Vives*, Aug. Civ.  
tell us, that Piety is also taken for reverence D. l. 4. c.  
to our Elders and Superiours: Which 23.  
makes it the more strange, that any should oppose Piety to that reverence and obedience, which they owe to their Parents and Superiours.

Comment.  
in Aug.

What shall we then say of them, who, as Tacitus, the Historian saith of Otho's Souldiers, *Iusta Ducum interpretari quam exequi malunt*, are nimbler at disputing, then at obeying the commands of their Governours? How far are they from that *Wisdom which is from above*: There is no doubt but such persons are furnished with many pleas to colour and countenance their disobedience. Some will find fault with those that rule them: And no doubt but

Tacitus,  
Hist. l. 2.

Facilis

Juvenal.  
Sat. 18.

—Facilis cuiusvis rigidi censura chaebinni.

he that is indued with a malicious mind towards any person, and carries a pestilent tongue in his head, may easily open his mouth against that mans person or actions: and ῥῆδον μωμῶν δεινὴ ἡ ψυχρὴ δεινὴ; It is much easier to see faults in those that govern, then to rule well if our selves were in Authority.

He takes but little notice of the state of the present world, who is not sensible that one great cause of breeding and nourishing this malignant and disobedient temper in mens spirits, is, the multitude of Seducers, who creep into houses, and lead by the ears, not onely silly women, but even men also, who think themselves wiser then the rest of the world, both from the obedience of the Faith, & from their allegiance to the King. Of whom we may say as Tacitus of the Mathematicians in Rome: They are, *Genus hominum potentibus infidum, sperantibus fallax, quod in republica nostra & vetabitur semper & retinebitur*: A sort of men disloyal to their Prince, Seducers to the people, whom the laws do condemn, but do not as yet prevail to restrain. These are they who zealously affect men but not well: and who indeed do fill them with that which our Apostle calls ζῆλον πικρὸν καὶ ἐριθείαν, bitter Envy and

Gal. 3. 17.

Jam. 3.

14.

and Strife. These are so far from deserving the Title of the Wisdom that is from above, that they are rather to be reckoned among them, whom the Apostle calls κυριόητες 2 Pet. 2. καλαστρονύτες, despisers of Government : And 10. another Apostle, κύματα ἄγρια θαλάσσης, Jud. v. 13. raging waves of the Sea, by whom ignorant and unstable souls are κλυδωνιζόμενοι, tossed to Eph. 4. 14. and fro. Whatsoever such men may pretend, the word of God tells us, that the Wisdom that is from above, is, ὑπειδής, of an obedient temper. But leaving this, let us advance towards the

Fifth Pillar in this Edifice, and that is 5 Pillar. μετὴ ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν full of mercy and good fruits. St. Gregory Nazianzene, Greg. exhorting to care for the poor, perswadeth Naz. us to works of Charity, in this manner. Orat. 19. If we believe St. Paul, yea Christ himself; Charity is to be esteemed the first and chief amongst those things that God commands, and the substance of the Law and the Prophets. And the branches of Charity, are, Taking care for the poor, and mercy and compassion towards our kindred : For God delights in no service so much as Mercy, because nothing is so suitable to his Nature, of whom it is said, Mercy and Truth, go before his Face, and Mercy rejoyceth over Judg- 14. ment. And indeed as every Tree is known Jam. 2. 13. by his fruits, so hereby onely can a man be known to have a good root and principle within,

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Within, if he bring forth these good fruits  
in his life.

Lud. Viv. But as *Ludovicus Vives* tells us, that *Epich-*  
in Aug. *urus* held indeed that there were Gods, but  
Civ. Dei. that they did not regard humane affairs,  
which is all one as to hold no Gods at all;  
so, many men hold and profess a faith, but  
such as is regardless of good works, which,  
as this Apostle tells us, is but a *dead faith*,  
St. *Augustine* sets forth many of the eminent  
Jam. 2. acts of some of the *Romans*: and, as he  
ulr. faith, If such low motives, as love to their  
Civ. Dei. Country, and desire of fame in the World,  
15. c. 18. as the Poet expresseth it,

Virgil. *Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cu-*  
Aeneid. *pido.*

if these Motives did extimulate *Brutus*, *Tor-*  
*quatus*, *Camillus*, *Scevola*, *Curtius*, and  
those other famous Hero's, to undertake  
such noble attempts, then what shame is it  
Tit. 2. 14. for Christians, if the Love of Christ and  
hopes of heaven, do not make them Zea-  
Civ. D. 1. *lous of good works*? But yet, as the said Fa-  
21. c. 27. ther doth admonish us, we must not think  
our good works to be meritorious, or that  
some acts of Charity will make satisfaction  
for the leading of an evil life: But we must  
endeavour to be constant, and even in lead-  
ing a good life, and *when we have done all*  
Luk. 17. *we can, acknowledge our selves to be but unpro-*  
10. *fitable*

*fitable servants.* This is the property of the Wisdom that is from above. But let us now pass on to the

Sixth Pillar in this Structure, it is ἀδίκαιος 6. Pillar. *Is*, which we render, *without partiality*: and in this sense it may shew us what Wisdom doth in a special manner belong to *Magistrates* in the execution of Justice, even not to respect persons in judgement, but to Deut. 7: judge righteous judgement: Not to reverence the person of the rich, nor yet to favour the person of the poor: But to be like *Aristides* or *Fabricius*, that it may be as impossible to move them from the wayes of Justice, as to disturb the Sun in its course. Exod. 23: 2, 3.

But (*my Lords*) I am confident you are so sensible of the obligations that lye upon you as to this, both from Conscience and Honour also, that I shall not need to speak any more of it: nor should I have said so much, if the Text had not drawn me to it.

But there are some that render this, *Dr Ham.* *without wavering* or inconstancy in the in locum Faith; and so it will return to the same purpose with that of *St. Paul*. Those that are come to be perfect men, that are arrived at the measure of the stature of the fulness of Eph. 4: 1 Christ, that are filled with this Wisdom which is from above, are secured that they be no more like Children and Novices κλυδωνιζουνοι, tossed like Ships at Sea, and περιεσθρουνοι, carried about.

Mat. 7.  
ul

bout like chaff with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive. And to this agrees that of our Saviour: Those that are built upon a solid Foundation, will stand fast against the assaults of wind and waves: and those that fall, do shew that they were never built upon any good Foundation of Divine and Heavenly Wisdom. *The Wisdom that is from above is fixed.*

But Beza renders it, *sine diffidio*; and Tremellius out of the Syriack, *sine disceptatione*, without wrangling or disputing. The 1 Tim. 6. Apostle tells us, that he is a man of a corrupt minde, and destitute of the Truth, who 4.5. *μη προσερχεται υγιαίνουσι λόγοις*, doth not come and resign up his judgement to a form of wholesome words: but is *νοσούντις ζητήσεσι και λογομαχίας*, doth dote, or is sick about questions and strifes of words: the ordinary and natural Fruits whereof, are envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, and *παράδιατεϊσαι*, perverse disputings or gallings of one another, not so much with a design to finde out the Truth, as to cross and vex the adversary. But, saith he, *Thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness.*

Ludov.  
Vives.

We read of *Anaxagoras*, that because a stone fell out of the Air into the River *Ægos*

gos in Thrace, he did therefore peremptorily hold an opinion, that the Heavens were made of stones; and that the Sun was a fiery stone. Whereupon *Euripides* his Scholar, calleth it a Golden-Turfe. And we are still brain-sick in studying the secrets of Nature. One will take upon him to command the Sun to stand still, and the dull Earth to move round it, to save the Sun the labour of moving. Others are like *Alexander*, of whom the Satyrift

*Unus Pelleo juveni non sufficit Orbis,  
Æstuat infelix angusto limite mundi,  
Ut Gyara clausus scopulis, parvæque Seripho.*

Juvenal.  
Sat. 10.

This small Earthly-Globe is not wide enough for their over-grown Fancies to bustle in, and therefore they have added to it a New World in the Moon: To which yet they have not thus far attained, to set up a Post-office, that we might have some correspondence with the people of that Region. Others will needs fancy a *Communis anima mundi*, to save the divine Providence, the labour of looking to particular things in the World. Others dream of a long time of the Præ-existence of the Soul of man, before it came into the body, much like the Egyptians, that conceit themselves to have a Chronicle of ma-

ny thousands of years before the world began.

These and many other fancies in Philosophy, we may reasonably believe to have proceeded rather from an humour to oppose the vulgar Opinions, and desire to finde out something New under the Sun, then that men did verily believe such things to be so as they have attempted to make others believe.

Nor is the wantonness of mans wit content to vary in *Philosophy*, except they may have liberty to frame a new body of *Divinity* too. And sure 'tis strange, how some mens humours suit with disputing and opposing each other: Who doubtless would not embrace so many Paradoxes, were it not, that to be heterodox will gall other men, and make themselves appear to be some body in the world, by wearing a colour distinct from other men.

But we may say by too sad experience, that *Nimium altercando amittitur veritas*, men have mudded these clear CrySTALLINE streams of Religion, by too much stirring in them, so that Truth can very hardly be discerned in the bottom. And indeed, *Pruritus disputandi scabies Ecclesiae*, This itch of disputing is one of the curses of the Law sent upon our Nation, for not keeping the Commandments of God: it hath taken off mens-fingers from a zealous practising of good

good duties, to claw this itch of opposition, while the life and power of Godliness hath been almost forgotten amongst such people. Yea, it hath opened the mouths of Papists, and men of Atheistical spirits, to reproach the *Protestant Religion*, if not all Religion, doubting whether there be any such thing in reality, because the professors of it cannot agree about it.

It might have been a necessary act of charity to have digressed here a little, to have fortified us against those advantages that *Papists* and *Atheists*, are apt to take against our Church, by reason of these divisions: By telling the *Atheist*, that there were as great differences between the *Platonists*, and *Peripateticks*, the *Stoicks*, and *Epicureans*, and *Academicks*, as there are now amongst Christians: By telling the *Papist*, that the differences between the *Thomists* and *Scotists*, between the *Jesuites* and *Seculars*, between the *Jansenists* and *Sorbonists*, are not inferior to those which they see amongst the *Protestants*. Besides, that the Church of England (properly so called) is like *Jerusalem*, a City compact together; and as for those that are turned aside to dangerous Sects and Errors, we may say, *They went out from us, because they were not of us.* <sup>1 Joh. 2. 19.</sup> And I might refer both *Papists* and *Atheists*, to that pious and learned Father, *St. Augustine*, *de Civ. Dei*. l. 18. c. 51. where he sheweth, how the

Lord is pleased to suffer Errors, and Schisms in his Church, for the trial of our Faith, and for the benefit of the Church in the issue.

Greg.  
Naz.  
Orat. 10.

But these things the time commands me to passe over: I shall therefore conclude this head, with that of St. Gregory Nazianzene: It is the first and chief wisdom to despise that wisdom, which consists in talking and subtilty of words, and in captiousness and opposition one of another. Leaving this then, let us proceed to view the

7 Pillar.

Seventh and last Pillar in this building. The Wisdom that is from above, is, *ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ὁρᾷ πρόσωπον*. *Vultum non accipit*, saith Beza, it doth not regard the faces or outward shew of men: *Sine simulatione*, saith Tremellius, without counterfeiting or dissembling. Diogenes Laertius, reports of Diogenes the Cynick, his trampling on Plato's pride, *sed majori fastu*. And this Cynick would sometimes in the coldest time of Winter, go to bathing himself in cold water, to make the people admire and pity him. But Plato easily saw that it was not virtue, but vainglory that made him do this, and perswaded the people to leave off taking notice of him, and he would presently be weary of these tricks. So the strange austerities and affected singularities of many of our deluded people, it is to be feared, arise from no better ground. And yet, as the Poet saith of covetousness,

Diog.  
Laert.

*Fallit*

*Fallit at hoc vitium specie virtutis & umbrâ,  
Cum sit triste habitu, vultuque & veste* Invenal  
severum. Sat. 14.

These austerities and singularities, are apt to impose upon injudicious people, as pieces of *Self-denial*, and singular parts of *mortification*, and forsaking of the world.

But there hath been a far worse sort of Hypocrisie practised in our dayes, like that of Nero, of whom the *Historian* speaks, *Quoties fugas aut cades jussit*, &c. When he had appointed to banish or murther any man, then he must have publick thanksgivings, Tacitus, given to the gods: and that which before Annual. was a sign of the common weal, did then l. 14. become a token of the common woe. How many of these *Jezabel-fasts* and thanksgivings have we seen? to the prophanation of the sacred Name of God, and to the scandal of our Religion; This was the fruit of that wisdom which the Apostle calls, *Satanicall*, Devilish.

But this subject of Hypocrisie, is too large to be entred upon at this time. I shall onely say, that he that onely seems to be a good Christian, hath onely the shew of Wisdom; but he alone that professeth himself, to be such as he ought to be, and is as good as he professeth himself, he hath *that wisdom which is from above*. For this is the bond and perfection of all the excellencies of this VVisdom, that it is *unmixed*, without Hypocrisie.

You

You have seen now the House of *VV*isdom surveyed, with its seven Pillars. *Κεφάλαιον δὲ ἔστι τοῖς λεγομένοις* : Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the Sum.

First, it is easie hence to judge, *τις σοφός καὶ ἐπισήμων ἐν ὑμῖν* ; who is a wise man among you, and endued with knowledge ; even he that can shew out of a good conversation, these fruits with meekness of *VV*isdom ; these Fruits, I say, which always grow upon the Tree of saying-knowledge. It is not enough to shew a man to be wise from above, to talk much of Religion and Purity, and of giving God his due ; if in the mean time he detract from *Cesar's* Rights ; if he be not of a peaceable spirit, and to this end ready to depart from his own right ; if he be not obedient to his Superiours, free from wrangling and unnecessary oppositions. Nor on the contrary is it sufficient to swagger for *Cesar*, if men be of prophane and lewd lives, or Atheists as to matters of Religion. But, as our Saviour saith in another case, *These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone* ; So, I say, he that to the *Wisdom of the Serpent* doth joyn the *innocency of the Dove*, he that is both a good Christian and a good Subject, he hath the *VV*isdom that is from above.

But, alas ! how little a Flock do such men make !

*Rari*

Luke II.  
42.

Mat. IO.  
16.

*Rari quippe boni.*——

said the *Satyrist*, good men are choise, and never choiser then now adays: *Non possumus* Aug. in. *negare plures esse malos, &c.* saith St. *Augustine*. *Psal. 47.* It cannot be denyed, but the most men are bad, and that the bad are so many, that amongst them there can hardly be discerned a good grain of Corn in the Floor; but whosoever looks upon the Floor, may think there is nothing but chaff there.

Secondly, this discovers the substance of every mans duty, which he should endeavour to put in practice, even to follow peace *Heb. 12.* with all men and holiness, without which no *14.* man shall see God. To be no brawlers, but gentle. To be obedient to every ordinance of *Tit. 3. 2.* man for the Lords sake. To be full of mercy *1 Pet. 2.* and good fruits: To avoid perverse disputings, *13.* such as are most suitable to men of corrupt *1 Tim. 6.* mindes: And finally, to fear the Lord, and *5.* serve him in sincerity. To profess our selves *Josh. 24.* to be such as God requires us to be: and to *14.* endeavour to walk up to our profession: As *Gal. 6.* many as walk according to this Rule, Peace *16.* be on them and Mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Finally, my Lords, I know you are sensible whom it is that you are to patronize, even them that are endued with this Wisdom that is from above: and against whom  
you

## The Properties of

you are to exercise the sword of Justice, even them that are opposite to it. You are sent by his Majesty, as his Vice-Gerents, *εἰς ἐκδίκησιν μὲν κακοποιῶν, ἑπαίνον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν* to the terror of evil doers, and to the praise and encouragement of them that do well. Them therefore that are prophane, and opposite to Purity, or turbulent and opposite to Peace, or factious and disobedient, your Lordships will please to observe them as the fit objects of the censures of the Law. But those that are good Christians, and good Subjects; whose practice is that *ἁγία καὶ ἀπλὴν*, that pure Religion and undefiled: who are first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be perswaded to obedience, full of mercy and good fruits, free from partiality, wrangling, and hypocrisie, your Lordships will please to own them with your Favour and Patronage.

Jam. i.  
27.

Now the Lord of Heaven, who alone giveth this Wisdom, and out of whose mouth Prov. 2.6. proceedeth Knowledge and Understanding; and Jam. 1.5. who hath bidden us, If we want wisdom, to ask it of him, deliver us from this wisdom which is Earthly, Sensual, Devilish; and teach us this Wisdom that is from above, 1 Pet. 1. which may make us holy as he is holy; and also to study to be quiet, and to do our own business: That so being Lovers and Promoters of Peace, we may receive the reward of Righteousness, even the peace and favour of

1 Pet. 1.

16.

1 Thes. 4.

11.

*Heavenly Wisdom.*

269

of God in this life, and the everlasting enjoyment of his blessed presence and love in the life to come. And that alone through thine al sufficient Merits, blessed Jesus:

Jam. 3.  
18.

To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost; three Persons, and one most glorious and infinite Deity, let us give, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, world without end, Amen.

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F I N I S.

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